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UNSTABLE IDENTITIES: MICHELLE CLIFF AND OLIVE SENIOR "SHORTSTORYTELLING" JAMAICA

EVA MARÍA MÉNDEZ BLÁZQUEZ
DIRIGIDA POR:
DRA. JULIA SALMERÓN CABAÑAS

Conclusión

La primera vez que leí las historias cortas de Olive Senior and Michelle Cliff fue durante mi beca Erasmus en Louvain-la–Neuve, Bélgica. Formaban parte de la lectura obligatoria de una asignatura llamada *Modernism/Postmodernism*. Todo era nuevo para mí y me enamoré de sus historias ya que eran muy diferentes de todo aquello que había leído con anterioridad. En seguida, me transportaron a un mundo exótico en una remota isla caribeña de la que solo había oído a través de agencias turísticas como un lugar donde descansar y comer sin límite en hoteles de todo incluido. Ambas autoras me mostraron un paraíso muy diferente en el cual la gente luchaba por su derecho a ser independientes y donde las mujeres trataban de evitar el estigma que el postcolonialismo y el patriarcado les había impuesto. Mi viaje a través de su literature fue también muy diferente; me sentí una parte de la isla, empaticé con sus protagonistas y sus preocupaciones raciales y con respecto a las tradiciones de la isla. En su ensayo "Hacia un criticismo feminista negro" ("Towards a Black Feminist Criticism"), Barbara Smith (1986) explica como las cuestiones raciales y de género han sido consideradas de forma separada. Ella reclama que ni los hombres negros ni las mujeres feministas blancas comprenden la doble presión impuesta sobre las mujeres negras. Por tanto, hablar de cuestiones sociales y de género conjuntamente siendo una mujer blanca occidental debería ser imposible ya que no se puede sentir esa doble presión que sienten las mujeres negras. Además, Smith menciona como el silencio impuesto es incluso peor para las mujeres negras lesbianas. Las autoras que trato en esta Tesis están comprometidas con todas esas voces diferentes. Olive Senior es negra y Michelle Cliff es lesbiana. Añaden sus experiencias como jamaicanas y feministas y de esta forma desafían lo que se ha considerado como central en la cultura femenina. Siendo una mujer blanca y heterosexual mi compromiso con los estudios de raza y género resultaría

casi impensable. Sin embargo, me considero una voz autorizada para analizar las voces de estas mujeres que han sido silenciadas tradicionalmente, con distancia pero con un sentido claro de justicia. Ambas autoras me incorporaron en sus trabajos al leerlos y me surgió la urgieron a analizar sus textos desde perspectivas histórica, raciales y de género.

Esta Tesis compara los trabajos de Olive Senior y Michelle Cliff. Ser jamaicanas podría ser inicialmente la única característica común de ambas autoras. Cuando empecé a investigar sobre ellas, me di cuenta de que ambas tenían un corpus sustancial de historias cortas y estos dos hechos me llevaron a establecer ciertas conexiones. Su origen jamaicano me llevó a trazar aspectos fundamentales del poscolonialismo y como aparece en sus trabajos. El principal marco teórico, por tanto es inevitablemente el del poscolonialismo y sus características como un movimiento que ocurre de forma simultánea al posmodernismo y con preocupaciones similares en cuanto a forma y temática. Sabía que tenía que tratar asuntos como la fragmentación temporal, la dicotomía narrador/autor y las más importante influencias que han tenido las autoras tal y como aparecen en sus historias cortas. El hecho de que ambas autoras sean originarias de antiguas colonias implica realizar una investigación más profunda en cuanto a la evolución histórica e identitaria del país y de las autoras. La teoría poscolonial desarrolla el conflicto racial y al tratar autoras mujeres, el conflicto de género has sido crucial para proporcionar un análisis más extenso. Por tanto, se analizan desde una perspectiva poscolonial asi como feminista. Estoy esencialmente interesada en la manera en la que proponen un discurso alternativo a las ideas más manidas sobre la época colonial y el patriarcado desafiando el canon literario y la historia tradicional. Si consideramos a Michelle Cliff y Olive Senior junto con otras escritoras jamaicanas

como Sylvia Wynter, Lona Goodinson o Rachel Manley, podríamos hablar de una generación.

¿Por qué intenté comparar dos autoras que nunca habían sido comparadas? Aunque encontremos diferencias en cuanto a su status social, su edad o su posición de género, la experiencia colonial en Jamaica marca un espacio común. Ambas co-habitan un espacio histórico y cultural similar y sus expectativas al delinear sus historias parece bastante similar; primero, en la forma, son historias cortas, segundo, porque se centran en retratar la experiencia colonial en su país. Las dos autoras examinadas en esta Tesis contribuyen a crear un corpus poscolonial con voces diferentes. Cuando esta Tesis doctoral estaba casi terminada, decidí ponerme en contacto con ellas, ya que ambas son contemporáneas y estaban vivas. En el caso de Michelle Cliff parecía que había desaparecido de la faz de la tierra. Contacté a sus editores un par de veces y nunca obtuve respuesta. Comprobé si había escrito algo recientemente y no encontré nada. Parecía como si desde que falleció su pareja, Adrienne Rich, en 2012, Cliff no había escrito nada ni había dado ninguna entrevista. Parecía estar recluida. Luego descubrí que había fallecido en julio de 2016. Con Olive Senior tuve más suerte. La contacté directamente a través de su página web, intercambié varios emails con ella y la entrevisté. Estaba promocionando su último volumen de historias cortas en Estados Unidos, Canadá y Reino Unido. Como estaba bastante ocupada y no podía verme en Reino Unido o vía Skype, decidí enviarle varias preguntas sobre su trabajo que he incluido al final de esta tesis. Después de dos meses me respondió. Sin embargo, mi desilusión fue notable. Solo me respondió a algunas preguntas y su conclusión fue que era labor del crítico responder a dichas preguntas. Senior considera que bajo ningún concepto debe ella proveer a nadie con las interioridades de su trabajo, sobre la forma en la que construye sus personajes o el marco teórico de su trabajo. Solo parecía

interesada en mi análisis de una de sus historias "Discerner of Hearts" como un cuento porque ella había pensado en ella de esta misma manera. Al final, no conseguí ninguna información relevante o nueva tras la entrevista. Es más, añadió a sus respuestas escuetas la siguiente reflexión: "Esto es todo lo que puedo decirte. Espero oír más de ti. Aprecio tu interés por mi trabajo y la visión que sin duda harás de su interpretación. ¡Quizás no necesitabas la contribución de la autora al final!"

Por tanto, todo lo que propongo en esta Tesis es mi versión de las autoras y su trabajo. No intento establecer un puente entre ellas y su audiencia. El análisis proviene de mi perspectiva, he asumido lo que pretendían implicar con sus historias y la construcción de las autoras es absolutamente personal. Tanto Senior como Cliff se han convertido en personajes para mí todos estos años. Intento acercarme a sus textos tras haber leído entrevistas, sus biografías y artículos sobre ellas, pero resultan un misterio para mí y al final he construido mi propia idea sobre ellas.

Además de considerar como la experiencia colonial aparece en los trabajos de Senior y Cliff y analizando su trabajo desde una perspectiva temática, presento sus textos desde una perspectiva formal, estudiando el género narrativo de la historia corta. Este subgénero surge como una colección de características específicas que estudio y contrasto. En este personal análisis crítico de las historias de Cliff y Senior, me aproximo a sus textos desde no solo una perspectiva poscolonial pero también considerando su trabajo como una alternativa a la historia tradicional. En todas sus historias ambas autoras abordan cuestiones raciales y de género. El hecho de ser mujeres hace que la cuestión de género adquiera ciertas connotaciones dentro del contexto feminista y el poscolonial. También muestran como ser mujeres influencia su narrativa y sus versiones de la realidad. Ambas autoras representan a "el otro" en los términos impuestos por la perspectiva imperialista. Tratan el estereotipo colonial y

como se relaciona con aspectos raciales, sociales y de género. Por eso, en mis argumentos, elaboro como la creación de arquetipos refuerza la idea de "el otro" y sitúa las colonias en una posición periférica al ser comparada con Gran Bretaña.

En el primer capítulo de esta Tesis, abordo como los autores poscoloniales confrontan la literatura británica canónica cuestionando la tradición temática de raza y género. He analizado "Swimmimg in the Ba'ma Grass" de Senior y "Columba" de Cliff. Las dos historias exploran el abuso sufrido por los jamaicanos negros por las instituciones del imperio como la policía, la iglesia y la influencia de la supremacía blanca. Senior y Cliff nos aportan la otra parte de la historia. La versión de aquellos que no tenían armas ni el poder para hacerse oír.

Cliff y Senior desafían la idea que retrata al sujeto colonial como un inferior silencioso. El poscolonialismo incorpora a los sujetos colonizados en la historia de sus propios países. Los autores poscoloniales le dan voz a los que han estado mudos tradicionalmente. Utilizan sus textos para desafiar la idea de "el otro" y empoderarle. Reflexionan sobre la construcción de sus textos como versiones autorizadas dentro de la experiencia colonial. Los críticos han señalado la importancia del lenguaje en la literatura poscolonial. El inglés, el lenguaje de la civilización y del discurso dominante, es el lenguaje usado por los autores poscoloniales para escribir. Para incluirse dentro de las convenciones del criticismo literario y cultural, paradójicamente, y traemos a colación el discurso de Caliban, emplean el lenguaje que les situa como "el otro" periférico. El sujeto colonizado, irónicamente, utiliza el lenguaje de la opresión, el inglés, para explicar sus circunstancias y representar su identidad, que es percibida como dividida. La voz del sujeto colonizado aparece como alternativa a aquella del conquistador en la literatura poscolonial. Los autores poscoloniales se enfrentan a la literatura británica canónica para afrontar el colonialismo con sus aspectos raciales y de

género. Subvierten el discurso colonial tal y como ha formado sus identidades desde una perspectiva occidental como una herramienta de empoderamiento. El poscolonialismo incorpora al sujeto poscolonial en la historia de su país. Las experiencias derivadas de la consideración de "el otro" contribuyen a la creación de un corpus de historias innovador en las que las voces tradicionales son desplazadas. Diversos proyectos para crear un corpus significativo que permita expresar la idiosincrasia de una minoría o una antigua colonia se han llevado a cabo en los últimos años. Toni Morrison compiló su "Black Book" por primera vez en 1974. Morrison empezó a recopilar fotos, noticias de periódico, partituras y postales porque sentía que la comunidad afro americana necesitaba poner a examen su historia, incluso aquellos episodios más dolorosos. La primera recopilación incluía anuncios de las ventas públicas de esclavos pero también retratos de la vida cotidiana. Morrison reclamaba que debía representar a los afros americanos como inteligentes y ocupados para poder contrarrestar los estereotipos creados durante los años de la segregación. La autora nigeriana Chimammanda Ngozi Adichie, junto con otros artistas influyentes nigerianos, ha hecho algo similar en los últimos años. Describen su proyecto de la siguiente forma: "Farafina Trust es una organización sin ánimo de lucro establecida para promocionar la lectura, la escritura y la cultura de introspección social y el compromiso a través de las literatura. Creemos que el desarrollo no es posible sin un conocimiento coherente de las dinámicas de nuestras sociedades, donde la literatura y las artes nos pueden ayudar a sujetar" **(**http://farafinatrust.org/**).** Intentan recopilar información sobre Nigeria y los nigerianos llevando a cabo talleres culturales. En una entrevista para el *Guardian*, Adichie dice que decidieron hacerlo para "crear un espacio seguro para que todos aquellos que tienen talento y quieren escribir en África puedan reunirse y recibir

validación y compartir cosas" (http://allafrica.com/stories/201408291017.html); y también refutar la historia única.

El capítulo dos, examina la noción de hibridad. La hibridad funciona en la literatura poscolonial hasta el punto de crear estereotipos que no se supone desafíen los roles establecidos durante todos los años de ocupación colonial. Senior y Cliff nos proporcionan un variedad de estos estereotipos y nos hacen reflexionar sobre aspectos identitarios. Tanto Cliff como Senior deconstruyen el estereotipo creado por el discurso colonial y muestran a sus lectores la fragmentación que esta visión unilateral ha creado con respecto al sujeto colonizado. La hibridad se refiere a mezcla y ha sido utilizado en lingüística y teoría racial para explicar cómo dos culturas diversas se combinan y se enfrentan en los territorios colonizados. Así, el poscolonialismo reclama que las dos culturas contribuyen igualmente a la identidad colonial. En la cultura contemporánea, se discuten ambas tendencias ya que los autores abordan cuestiones relacionadas con la raza y la nación revisando su pasado y la evolución de su país como basado en la dicotomía de esta cultura distintiva. La hibridad y su representación ha sido analizada en esta Tesis, considerando la voz narrativa como una reacción poscolonial al patriarcado accidental que prevaleció en Jamaica durante los tiempos de la colonización. La historias cortas de las dos autoras comparadas en esta Tesis, se rebelan contra la idea de la existencia de un canon británico ya que de forma efectiva articulan las voces de un grupo de personajes que tradicionalmente han sido discriminados en el discurso oficial. Es más, como se representa en las narrativas poscoloniales, la creación de la identidad parece una tarea difícil para las mujeres negras: sus personajes necesitan definir su identidad no solo como mujeres sino también en términos raciales, ya que son estigmatizadas al mismo tiempo por ideologías de raza y género. Tanto "The Glass-Bottom Boat" como "Window" se sitúan en algún lugar de Jamaica. Las dos historias

hablan de la contradicción que surge en las antiguas colonias con respecto a la tradición y el cambio. “Window amor. Dos jóvenes amantes deben superar las normas raciales impuestas ppor la comunidad. Brid proviene de una familia de blancos empobrecidos donde el hecho de ser blancos es usado para mantener su status social. Jesse es un hombre negro que ha hecho fortuna trabajando en el Canal de Panamá. Esta historia retrata como la raza permea las relaciones en la sociedad jamaicana. La situación de Eric en “The Glass-Bottom Boat” también está marcada por la raza y el status social. Trata sobre aceptar el guión que la historia y la sociedad han planeado para uno o escapar los límites sociales desarrollándose por voluntad propia.

Dentro del marco teórico de mi proyecto de investigación, el capítulo tres elabora como el colonialismo ha sido crucial para la presente constitución de las antiguas colonias y para los sujetos colonizados. Me he aproximado a esta cuestión a través de la teoría de intertextualidad, una noción que aparece en los textos poscoloniales como una forma de retar el discurso tradicional impuesto durante años por el imperio. Analizo la noción de intertextualidad tal y como ha evolucionado y en la forma en la que aparece en las historias cortas seleccionadas y en su importancia en las teorías feministas contemporáneas. Desde que fue acuñado el término en los años 60 hasta nuestros días, de estructuralismo a poscolonialismo, el concepto de intertextualidad ha sido definido desde diferentes perspectivas. La intertextualidad se basa en la idea de que los textos no tienen sentido de forma independiente. Aporto los enfoques más relevantes en relación con esta teoría, desde sus antecedentes en la teoría lingüística de Saussure hasta sum uso en la crítica literaria y en movimientos actuales como el feminismo o el poscolonialismo como una estrategia efectiva de subvertir las nociones estereotípicas sobre femineidad y estándares raciales. El término intertextualidad surgió cuando Julia Kristeva estudió y combinó el modelo linguistico

de signos de Saussure con la teoría dialógica de Bakhtin. Tras el enfoque structuralista, el posestructuralista RolandBarthes le añadió una dimensión social a la teoría. En su ensayo "La muerte del autor", Barthes cuestiona los roles de autor, lector y textos tradicionales. Tras abordar la concepción de una red literaria que funciona como una batalla entre los autores y sus predecesores de Harold Bloom, detallo como intertextualidad es interpretado por críticos y autores poscoloniales y feministas. Con esta teoría en mente, mi objetivo principal es el de examinar como las dos autoras comparadas en esta disertación han incorporado esta técnica en sus textos. Me centro en la forma en la que Cliff y Senior han deconstruido roles raciales y de género negativos en relación con el discurso histórico convencional. La intertextualidad como una estrategia literaria altera las asunciones tradicionales sobre la producción de textos, ya que se centra en los roles de autor y lector. Tradicionalmente se le ha dado mucha importancia a la figura del autor, pero la intertextualidad cuestiona su función. Para los escritores poscoloniales así como para las feministas, obviar el autor resulta en opresión. Altamente involucrados con grupos minoritarios, uno de los principales propósitos es el de autorizar sus narrativas y el de adscribirles interpretaciones específicas para subvertir las representaciones tradicionales de género y raza en literatura, historia y sociedad. Los escritores poscoloniales han dedicado sus textos a revisar y re-escribir textos canónicos que les habían dejado sin voz. Estos escritores, de forma satírica, se apropian de imaginería existente de los sujetos coloniales para transformarlos adaptándoles a sus propósitos. Senior y Cliff recuperan contenido histórico y cultural latente y construyen sus narrativas desde el pensamiento transgresivo feminista. La intertextualidad genera tensión entre los elementos prestados del texto fuente y los incorporados de forma subversiva. Por esto, el capítulo tres se centra en los cambios más importantes que propone la historia en comparación con el

canon. Evalua como los textos convencionales han sido re-orientados en cuanto a su voz narrativa retando cuestiones de autoridad y contenido.

"Discerner of Hearts" de Senior y "Screen Memory" de Cliff nos cuentan momentos pasados de la vida de las principales protagonistas y como han afectado sus vida en el presente. La memoria funciona como una manera de afrontar el pasado colonial. Aquí, la intertextualidad sirve para contrastar las perspectivas de los sujetos coloniales con las concepciones asumidas sobre las colonias. En un nivel textual. La memoria funciona como un agente curativo. En un nivel creativo, hace lo mismo cuando se considera una estrategia subversiva. Recordar se transforma en un requisito decisivo a la hora de curar el desasosiego producido por la falta de control en sus propias vidas. La memoria es crucial para las protagonistas a la hora de construir sus historias. Además, es crucial en la forma de intertextualidad para las autoras en su esfuerzo por legitimarse como autoras de sus narrativas. Recuperar el pasado a través de la memoria simboliza sus esfuerzos por revisar el discurso canónico, que les sirve en su deseo de provocar un cambio en los ideales y concepciones sobre las mujeres negras que existen en su sociedad. Algunas historias cortas de Cliff y Senior presentan la necesidad de recordar para ser curadas de las heridas causadas por un pasado traumático. Para estas autoras, la intertextualidad es la cura, la solución para evitar las imágenes convencionales y patriarcales de la femineidad y de la raza que encontramos en textos canónicos que el colonialismo ha escrito.

En el capítulo cuatro, se define el concepto de metaficción historiográfica como un tipo específico de intertextualidad. Este marco teórico íntimamente relacionado con la literatura comparada es crucial para trazar el contexto literario de los trabajos de Senior y Cliff. En relación con intertextualidad, hablo sobre la forma en la que Jamaica se representa como un país poscolonial utilizando esta teoría. Para complementar el

análisis de las diferentes historias es necesario considerar la evolución histórica del país y su gente. Aplicar la metaficción historiográfica como el marco teórico me permite atajar tanto el desarrollo de las autoras como de los personajes representados en las mismas en relación con Jamaica como país poscolonial. Por tanto, se explica como un tipo de intertextualidad que emplea textos históricos. Con la intención de mostrar los aspectos más significativos de esta teoría, utilizo los trabajos de académicos como Linda Hutcheon y Brian McHale. Su ámbito de estudio se centra en las diferentes estratégias usadas en posmodernismo tales como metaficción historiográfica en el contexto de intertextualidad paródica. Además estudio como esta forma específica de intertextualidad en referencia a textos históricos ha sido empleada por escritores contemporáneos de grupos minoritarios, para hacer frente a la visión oficial de la historia desde un punto de vista alternativo. Investigo como la metaficción historiográfica sirve para cuestionar nuestro pasado histórico.

La metaficción historiográfica está considerada dentro del contexto de la intertextualidad paródica, se refiere a los eventos históricos y ha sido empleada por escritores contemporáneos que pertenecen a grupos minoritarios para proponer una versión alternativa de la historia. Analiza como la incorporación de intertextos históricos les sirve a los autores para integrar sus rendiciones del pasado y otorgarse un a voz dentro de los hechos que narran. Trata la relación entre pasado y presente y el modo en el que se representa en el trabajo de las autoras comparadas. La metaficción historiográfica llama a una reconsideración de las representaciones sociales, políticas e históricas de nuestra sociedad. Al incorporar voces tradicionalmente silenciadas podemos comprender el desarrollo histórico y las construcciones sociales de nuestra sociedad. Al reconsiderar textos canónicos, los autores poscoloniales completan los huecos históricos dejados por el discurso colonial; las antiguas colonias adquieren una

historia y un pasado que el imperialismo trató de ocultar para poder justificar su posición en esos territorios. Los autores poscoloniales exploran la historia intelectual imperial y nos muestran como ciertas ideas relacionadas con la raza, la cultura y la identidad pueden ser reasignadas. Tanto Cliff como Senior incorporan los elementos más significativos del folklore y la cultura tradicional de los nativos jamaicanos a sus trabajos. Proporcionan a los lectores con señales de las raíces caribeñas así como con elementos culturales nuevos incorporados durante la colonización. Ambas autoras pretenden alterar las representaciones históricas incluidas en ciertos documentos históricos aportando un espacio positivo. En este capítulo, estudio dos textos de Cliff, "Keeper of all souls" y "A woman who plays the Trumpet is Deported". En ambos casos sendos textos históricos forman parte de la historia. En el caso de la segunda historia citada, Cliff usa la historia de una trompetista real para construir su historia.

Finalmente, el capítulo cinco analiza dos historias cortas de Olive Senior: "The Case against the Queen" y "You think I mad, Miss". En estas historias, Senior cuestiona la forma en la que el patriarcado ha considerado tradicionalmente los eventos narrados por mujeres como poco fiables o incompletos. La autora se apropia estas voces femeninas para empoderar a las mujeres como autónomas y fiables. El patriarcado le niega a las mujeres poder político y sitúa a aquellas que deciden no seguir la corriente principal o se rebelan contra el rol que se les ha asignado como psicológicamente inestables y extrañas. Este punto queda aclarado ya que ambas protagonistas en las historias de Senior están sometidas al control de representantes masculinos y del poder patriarcal. Hay un lenguaje político que excluye a las mujeres y por tanto, la posibilidad de estas de ser autónomas y autorizar su propia historia. Si uno puede analizar el rol del autor en los textos se puede concluir que este se basa en crear personajes y eventos con la imaginación. Esto es precisamente de lo que el narrador en cualquier texto se hace

eco. Pero, en estas historias, aparecen varios marcos de construcción textual. En ambas historias se considera la demencia creada por la imposición del lenguaje del conquistador y la aceptación de la identidad se construye desde la perspectiva de la cultura dominante. Estas historias cuestionan la autoría y creación de textos. Ambos grupos subyugados, mujeres y nativos, han sido reducidos a estereotipos y privados de una identidad por el sistema que les oprime. Los estudios poscoloniales han reaccionado a esto cuestionando hasta qué extremo afecta a las vidas de las mujeres en países colonizados.

Para concluir, considero que esta Tesis establece una conexión entre dos autoras que no tienen tantas conexiones claras. Suscita cuestiones que pueden ser importantes para estudiar el trabajo de otras autoras jamaicanas y establece un interés común por un estilo literario específico del siglo veinte. Asimismo, abre la posibilidad de estudiar más en profundidad dentro del contexto literario jamaicano, ya que durante las últimas décadas ha surgido un grupo de nuevas autoras que expresan sus preocupaciones raciales y de género y tratan la historia de la isla y su desarrollo como un hito cultural en el Caribe.

En el presente resumen, establezco el marco teórico de esta tesis. Analizo la teoría de metaficción historiográfica y su importancia en la ficción contemporánea como una forma de incorporar los eventos históricos en las corrientes principales de la ficción actual. Abordo teorías como la revisión de la creación de mitos o la parodia intertextual como estrategias para subvertir la representación eurocéntrica que encontramos en los textos canónicos. Asimismo, desarrollo los principales aspectos del poscolonialismo como un movimiento contemporáneo al posmodernismo. Ambos, poscolonialismo y posmodernismo, comparten características importantes como es, por ejemplo, el cuestionar tanto la representación como el discurso oficial. Igualmente exploro el concepto de hibridad en relación a la identificación del sujeto colonial como "el otro".

En esta Tesis Doctoral se analiza y compara a dos escritoras jamaicanas contemporáneas: Michelle Cliff y Olive Senior. Senior es considerada una contadora de historias, por la influencia de la tradición oral y de cuentos tradicionales en su narrativa. Cliff podría ser considerada una crítica histórica ya que es el principal aspecto de su trabajo. El hecho de que ambas sean de origen jamaicano es crucial para comprender la influencia postcolonial en sus textos. El poscolonialismo, como se ha dicho más arriba, es uno de los marcos teóricos principales analizados en esta Tesis y es un movimiento que acontece simultáneamente al posmodernismo. Mientras el posmodernismo surge como movimiento primeramente en Estados Unidos, las antiguas colonias desarrollan su propio movimiento con características muy similares en cuanto a forma y temática. Ambas teorías abordan la fragmentación temporal y espacial en los textos y la dicotomía existente entre autor y narrador además de la forma en la que textos pasados influyentes son re-escritos y son tratados en la literatura poscolonial. El hecho de que estos autores pertenezcan a antiguas colonias determina su evolución tanto en cuanto a

su historia como a su identidad cultural. La teoría poscolonial aborda conflictos raciales y de género, como podemos observar en los textos de las autoras seleccionadas. Por este motivo es importante considerar tanto la perspectiva poscolonial como la feminista, máxime cuando tanto Senior como Cliff son consideradas voces alternativas dentro de la literatura caribeña. Los críticos han admirado de ambas su reproducción del criollo jamaicano así como la exploración de asuntos como la identidad, el nacionalismo cultural, la estratificación de clase y el impacto opresivo del colonialismo especialmente en las mujeres y los pobres. Uno de los principales logros de estas autoras es retratar a las mujeres jamaicanas en su intento de trascender los roles de género.

Las historias de Senior están situadas en Jamaica y narran eventos acaecidos en diferentes periodos del periodo colonial. La autora utiliza diferentes perspectivas aunque su conciencia es principalmente femenina, marcando su interés por el rol de las mujeres. Olive Senior trata de animar a los jamaicanos con sus textos a reconocer y apreciar su herencia cultural. Presenta personajes que normalmente consiguen un equilibrio vital e identitario cuando consiguen asumir sus raíces culturales. La utilización del criollo jamaicano y las tradiciones orales de la isla le otorgan a su narrativa con un gran poder narrativo. Constantemente explora la relación entre los jamaicanos y sus raíces culturales. Una de sus habilidades principales es la del uso del lenguaje y sus diferentes dialectos para revelar diferencias culturales de forma efectiva. Gracias a los diferentes dialectos sitúa a los personajes en una determinada clase social y nos ayuda a marcar su raza y formación. Su ficción retrata a la perfección la vida de las distintas comunidades en Jamaica. Esta representación del país, puede ser considerada una afirmación nacionalista y una forma de cuestionar la representación colonial. En las historias de Senior existe una clara relación entre tradición y modernidad. Senior representa la experiencia femenina contada por mujeres. Temas

como alienación, aislamiento, abuso infantil, discriminación racial, victimización colonial y búsqueda de la identidad personal y cultural son cruciales para entender su ficción. En general, sus historias presentan una sociedad en la que la raza, la clase y el poder determinan las relaciones entre los personajes.

La otra autora en estudio de esta Tesis, es Michelle Cliff. Es considerada una de las voces más innovadoras y provocadoras del panorama literario poscolonial, ya que la jamaicana, aborda temas como racismo, sexismo, homofobia o prejuicios de clase en su país, Reino Unido o Estados Unidos. Cliff critica, en sus textos, el colonialismo y sus imposiciones culturales. Ser criolla de piel clara, lesbiana y jamaicana le confiere a Cliff una serie de afiliaciones étnicas y culturales, que le sirven para abordar la influencia de la opresión colonial desde perspectivas diversas. Su trabajo ahonda en el desarrollo histórico de su país desde que era una colonia hasta la independencia y sus influencias en nuestros días. Argumento en mi trabajo que, para la autora, utilizar la narrativa para revisar la historia de su país es un intento de proponer puntos de vista diferentes a los de la versión oficial impuesta por el imperio británico. Así, Cliff ofrece a sus lectores una revisión histórica no europeísta al considerar la historia como una disciplina no unívoca sino coral, donde los diferentes puntos de vista se entrelazan llenando los vacíos y dando voz a los que no han formado parte de la versión de la historia tradicional.

Además de escribir sobre la historia de su país, Cliff profundiza en la inferencia de la desigualdad racial y la homofobia en Jamaica. Su obra se ocupa de los conflictos que los personajes experimentan por culpa del racismo imperante en el país. La mayoría de sus personajes dividen sus vidas entre dos mundos que co-existen en Jamaica; aquel en el que son privilegiados por el color claro de su piel y aquel en el que no son aceptados por poseer una genética mixta.

Una de las características más aclamadas de la ficción de Cliff es la de ser capaz de recrear el pasado de la isla desde diferentes perspectivas para contrarrestar las estructuras racistas, patriarcales y homófobas imperantes y hegemónicas. Su trabajo es un proceso constante de asunción y superación de dichos prejuicios y una crítica abierta de los sistemas opresivos que deberían ser desmantelados. Como otras autoras y escritores contemporáneos pertenecientes a grupos minoritarios, Cliff intenta buscar historias reales de diferente calado, en vez de una sola historia unitaria donde los sujetos colonizados y las mujeres han sido tradicionalmente silenciados. Hace el esfuerzo de re-escribir la historia desde la conciencia colectiva. Explora la naturaleza híbrida de los jamaicanos a la hora de crear su identidad. Sus personajes cruzan fronteras de raza, género y sexualidad. Hay una distinción clara, en sus textos, entre colonizador y sujeto colonizado.

En esta Tesis, en definitiva, analizo y comparo las narrativas breves de dos autoras jamaicanas, Michelle Cliff y Olive Senior, desde una perspectiva poscolonial pero también feminista. Valoro como su trabajo propone alternativas a la historia oficial y tradicional aportando una visión diferente sobre los conflictos raciales y de género inmersos en la comunidad jamaicana, debidos fundamentalmente a la influencia colonial que ha experimentado Jamaica.

CONTENTS

Introduction

In this introduction, I establish the theoretical framework for this thesis. I deal with historiographic metafiction and its importance in contemporary fiction as a means of incorporating historical events in the mainstream of current fiction. I tackle theories such as revisionary mythmaking and intertextual parody as strategies to subvert the Eurocentric representation embedded in canonical texts. Then, I elaborate on the main aspects of postcolonialism as a movement which is contemporary to postmodernism. Both share important characteristics such as the questioning of representation and discourse. In addition I also explore the concept of hybridity in relation to the identification of the colonial subject as "the other". Before I elaborate on the different theoretical approaches, I introduce the two female authors in comparative analysis in this thesis: Michelle Cliff and Olive Senior.

This thesis analyses and compares two Jamaican contemporary writers: Olive Senior y Michelle Cliff. Senior is considered a storyteller, because of the influence of oral tradition and tale in her writing; Cliff is regarded as a "history reviewer" because of the central aspect of history in her writing. Both authors are of Jamaican origin. This fact is crucial to understand the postcolonial aspects of their texts. Postcolonialism, as one of the main theoretical frameworks is to be analysed as a movement occurring simultaneously to postmodernism. Whereas postmodernism emerged in the United States to then spread to Europe, former colonies developed their own movement with similar characteristics considering form and theme. Both theories deal with spatial and time fragmentation, the dichotomy author/narrator as well as on how influential intertexts are rewritten and appear in postcolonial writings. The fact that these authors belong to a former colony determines their evolution both as regards to history as to identity. Postcolonial theory tackles race and gender conflicts and there can also be seen

in the works of the authors chosen. Therefore, it is important to deal with these authors from two perspectives: the feminist and the postcolonial. Furthermore, both Senior and Cliff are regarded as challenging voices in West Indian literature. Critics have praised their reproduction of Jamaican Creole in their written work, as well as their exploration of issues such as identity, cultural nationalism, class stratification, and their oppressive impact on women and the poor. One of their main achievements is to portray Jamaican women as they try to transcend gender roles. Olive Senior said in an interview for *Callaloo* in 1988:

> Why do I write? Because the imperative to do so has been the strongest single force in my life and though I have been sidetracked by many, many muses, abused this one and wished it away, anxious always about the exacting nature of the commitment, I think it has finally claimed me. I have finally accepted the fact that, yes, writing is what I am supposed to do with my life; it is the way I affirm myself. […] The constant tug between private aloofness and community and social sharing has shaped my personality, my world-view and my work. […] Ultimately, we are all nothing more- or less- than children of the universe (Senior 1988: 487).

Olive Senior was born December 23, 1941, in Western Jamaica, when it was still a British colony. This fact is crucial for her poetry and fiction. As a child, she attended Montego Bay High School for Girls, where she founded a school literary magazine and began to contribute articles for *The Daily Gleaner*, one of the major newspapers on the island. After high school, Senior travelled to Wales to study journalism. She finally graduated at Carleton University, in Ottawa, Canada in 1967. Around this time she began to write her first short stories. In 1980 several of her poems appeared in the poetry collection *Jamaica Women.* She also worked as an editor of the influential periodical *Jamaica Journal* from 1982 to 1989. Senior has been a guest lecturer and writer-in-residence in both the Caribbean and North America. She has worked internationally as a creative writing teacher and lecturer on Caribbean literature and culture. She is on the faculty of the Humber School for Writers, Toronto, and has taught

in the writing programmes at the universities of Toronto, St Lawrence, Columbia, New York and Barnard College. Senior has received several prestigious awards for her work, including the Institute of Jamaica Centenary Medal in 1980, the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1987, the Silver Musgrave Medal for Literature in 1989, and the F. G. Bressani Literary Prize for poetry in 1994.

Many of Senior's stories are concerned with issues of ethnicity and identity. *Summer Lightning and Other Stories* (1986), Senior's first collection of short fiction comprises ten short stories set in rural Jamaican communities, utilizes Jamaican Creole, and focuses on the perspective of poor, rural children. Her second collection, *Arrival of the Snake-Woman and Other Stories* (1989), switches the focus of the stories to urban, middle-class settings employing Standard English rather than Jamaican Creole. In the title story, an exotic Indian woman overcomes the alienation of being the outsider in a Jamaican small village and finds refuge and friendship in other women. Womanhood serves a common ground for them to overcome difficulties. Like in other stories by Senior, critics point out resistance to change and the fear of outsiders as principal themes in this story and in Senior's work in general.

Senior's later collection, *Discerner of Hearts* (1995), includes nine stories that once again focus on female characters who struggle to transcend a strict racial and class structure. These stories are set in Jamaica and in various times from the colonial period to the present day. The stories in *Discerner of Hearts* are told from a variety of different perspectives. This signals a change in Senior's writing. In her early works she stuck to children's view, but in this last work she has expanded her point of view to that of adults, male and female, and children of different races and classes. Still, the consciousness is predominantly female, marking her interest in women's roles. *Discerner of Hearts* is Olive Senior's attempt to encourage Jamaicans to embrace their

heritage. She presents likable characters who find comfort only when they achieve a balance that includes their cultural roots.

The author's utilization of Jamaican Creole and oral storytelling traditions as powerful narrative devices transforms the tittle story, "Discerner of Hearts", into a tale-like one. There are certain elements that call to mind the fairy tale genre. This story begins with a girl, Theresa, who is about to cross the street alone so as to go to Mr Burnham's place. She goes there to help her family's black servant, Cissy, to deal with *obeah*[1] (Jamaican native culture). Cissy thinks the wife of the man whose child she is carrying has performed *obeah* on her. This issue has led her to lock herself in her cot out of depression because she thinks she has lost her baby. The only man in the black community who can deal with *obeah* is Mr Burnham, known by the blacks as a healer and a "discerner of hearts". Therefore Theresa, defying the danger of being snatched by the Blackartman, an evil figure who takes the heart of children to perform black magic, decides to go to Mr Burham's to ask him to help Cissy. There are two clearly differentiated communities in the story; that of the rich white owners and that of the black servants. Each of them has different principles and rules. In Cissy's community, getting pregnant is something valuable, even though her mistress does not approve of it. So, she finds the best possible candidate: Fonso. Other black girls have carried Fonso's children before, so, even though he is married to Ermine, Cissy asks Mr Burham to play magic rituals on him so that she can get pregnant. Finally, Cissy is pregnant but her guilt makes her believe she has lost her baby. Theresa's mother calls Dr Carter, the

[1] Olive Senior's *Encyclopedia of Jamaican Heritage* describes obeah as "the word used in Jamaica to denote witchcraft, evil magic or sorcery by which supernatural power is invoked to achieve personal protection or the destruction of enemies" (Senior 2004: 355). It was declared illegal in 1761. Yet, it is certain that obeah occupies an important space in Caribbean set of beliefs and its practice is still quite popular; "used for personal protection in health, legal issues and matters of the heart" (Senior 2004: 475).

family doctor, to see her and he confirms she is pregnant already. Yet, Cissy cannot believe it and remains locked down in her cot. This is the reason why, Theresa, whose love for Cissy is immense decides to cross the road to seek Mr Burnham for help. Theresa is very shy and insecure. He mother is always boating about her sisters' beauty and abilities and always leaves her unattended. Cissy is the one who encourages Theresa not to feel bad about it and shows her all her good qualities. This is why she finds refuge in Cissy and does not want to lose her. This story will be analysed at length in Chapter Three.

Olive Senior consistently explores the relationship between native Jamaicans and their cultural roots. One of Senior's strongest aspects is her ability to use language and dialect to reveal cultural differences; she is particularly effective in reproducing the speech of her characters. The language allows the reader to discern the character's class. There is a mix of native Jamaican language and colonial English. Senior's short fiction effectively portrays Jamaican community life. In her native country, they see this depiction of Jamaican life and people as an affirmation of cultural nationalism and as a way of questioning colonial representation. Senior's stories are also noted for their interplay between tradition and modernity as it is reflected in "The Chocho Vine". In this story also part of the *Discerner of Hearts* (1995) collection, the tree and the old lady symbolise the old order whereas the Rasta men living next to her, portray the changes her own country and its people had to go through as I will elaborate on in Chapter Four.

Senior is also keen of representing the female experience from a woman's perspective. Themes of alienation, displacement, child abuse, racial discrimination, colonial victimization, and the search for personal and cultural identities have been named as the key motifs of Senior's short fiction. In general, her stories present a society in which race, class, and power determine relationships. White is admired, and

Black is not yet acceptable. For example, “Window” compares the possibilities of young people in Jamaica. The white girls, even though they are poor, can change their social status and whiteness is their passport to a better life; however, Dev, a black man, feels unable to change his social position because of the colour of his skin. Characters are preoccupied with forward progress. The characters in many of Senior’s stories emphasize the importance of education and the ability to afford the proper education in order to move on to study abroad. This is evident in the stories “Zig-Zag” and “The Case Against the Queen”, also in *Discerner of Hearts*, because characters sacrifice necessities in order to send their children to school since the ruling class and wealthier Jamaicans value education. Characters in her fiction are also class-conscious. In “Zig-Zag”, Senior establishes a clear distinction between the way Desrine, the servant and her daughter, Manuela, speak. The mother has sacrificed everything so that her daughter could have a better education and therefore, a better life. Senior has continued teaching and writing. Her last collection of short stories, *The Pain Tree*, was published in 2015.

The other author in this thesis is Michelle Cliff. Cliff is generally viewed as one of the most innovative and provocative Caribbean novelists because of the way she deals with issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and class prejudice in Jamaica, the United States, and Great Britain:

> I really don’t think about my writing in relationship to traditional genres. I have involved myself in finding my voice, unique to me, and that I see as a journey into my imagination without regard to the boundaries of genre (Cliff in Enszer 2010: np).

Michelle Cliff was born on November 2, 1946, to a middle-class family of black and white racial background in Jamaica, at a time when her homeland was still a British colony, as it was the case with Senior. As a light-skinned Creole, a lesbian and a Jamaican, Cliff has a multiplicity of cultural and ethnic affiliations, facts which help her

to treat colonial oppression from a diversity of perspectives. Her work explores the historical development of her country from colony to independent state. Cliff's "re-visioning" of history through fiction is an attempt to see history through the eyes of silenced people. Her interest in history can be traced in the answer she gave when asked about her work as an attempt to revise "monolithic history":

> Who said that? Monolithic? As far as writing about the Caribbean I think that I am trying to revise a colonized history, a history that's been interpreted from a European perspective only, and I'm trying to revision it as a history that is more complex. I don't like the word "Monolithic;" it sounds so heavy handed, but that's a critical thing, so.... (Cliff in Clawson 2011: np).

Cliff makes her intention clear, her aim is that of revising history from the perspective of the non-European, taking into account the complexity of history as a discipline with a great variety of points of views and not a unitary perspective.

Michelle Cliff and her family lived in Jamaica for the first three years of her life, and then moved to a Caribbean neighbourhood in New York, where they lived. They returned to Jamaica in the late fifties when she was ten. The family returned to the states and she received her Bachelor's Degree in European History from Wagner College, in New York, in 1969. She accepted a position at the New York publisher W. W. Norton in 1970. The next year Cliff went to England and entered the Warburg Institute at the University of London, where she finished her Master of Philosophy on languages and comparative historical studies of the Italian Renaissance. This same year she returned to work at Norton assuming the responsibilities of copy editor and eventually manuscript and production editor. It was not until she was in her late thirties that she began to write. An article misrepresenting Jamaica inspired her to publish a corrective response. Cliff says she started writing because she "had something to say about the place I come out of" (Cliff in Clawson 2011: np). She left the publishing firm in 1979 to concentrate on her first book, a collection of prose-poetry entitled *Claiming and Identity They Taught*

me to Despise (1980), where she focuses on interracial prejudice. From 1981 to 1983 Cliff served as editor and co-publisher, with female poet Adrienne Rich, of the feminist journal *Sinister Wisdom*, and from 1980 to 1989, she was a member of the editorial board of the journal *Signs*. Cliff and Rich became partners for life until the latter died in 2012. During the 1980s, Cliff turned her attention to novel-writing and published *Abeng* (1984) and *No Telephone to Heaven* (1987). In addition to her work as a writer and editor, Cliff has taught at several American colleges and universities and has contributed regularly to various feminist and literary periodicals. She published *Summer Lightning and Other Stories*, her first collection of short stories, in 1986 and her third novel, *Free Enterprise*, in 1993. Since then, Cliff was named the Allan K. Smith Professor of English Language and Literature at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and has been a contributing editor to the journal *American Voice*. She has also published another novel, *Into the Interior* (2010) and several collections of short stories: *Bodies of Water* (1990), *The Store of a Million Items* (1998) and *Everything is Now: New and Collected Stories* (2009).

In addition to writing about the history of her country, Cliff explores the inference of racial inequality and homophobia as they develop in Jamaica. Cliff's works address the conflicts that many of her characters experience because of their skin tone. Her major characters are often split between two worlds: worlds in which they are privileged because of the lightness of their skin, and worlds in which they are not entirely accepted because of their mixed heritage. Her first two novels are to some extent autobiographical. In the first one, *Abeng* (1984), the main character, Clare Savage, experiences a rise in consciousness as she recognizes how her lighter skin tone affects her relationships with people of darker skin tones. Clare's parents are both light and dark: Clare's mother, Kitty Savage, is a descendant of early Jamaican known as the

Maroons whereas Boy Savage is a descendant of a slave owner known for his extreme brutality. Kitty is proud with her skin colour and close to her people. Clare is light skinned and struggles to identify her place in Jamaica. Clare's personal history is intertwined with the mythology of Nanny, a legendary Maroon and enchantress, "who could catch a bullet between her buttocks and render the bullet harmless" (Cliff 1984: 14). By mixing these two stories, Cliff creates a historical narrative that connects the development of the main character and that of Jamaica. Abeng's main character, Clare Savage, returns in Cliff's second novel, *No Telephone to Heaven* (1987), as a young woman who is very conscious of racial inequalities both in Jamaica and England. It starts with a violent episode in which a white family is killed in its home and the body of the father is mutilated, with his own genitals in the mouth. This murder is believed to be a racial revenge and Kingston is portrayed as a dangerous place for white people. In *No Telephone to Heaven*, the novel's protagonist, migrates from Jamaica to America as a teenager in 1960. Then, Clare leaves America after she finishes college to enter a graduate Renaissance studies program in England, "the mother-country" (Cliff 1987:109). After travelling through Europe, Clare, now in her thirties, returns to Jamaica, and works as a secondary school teacher. In this novel, Clare claims the history and the identity of her maternal heritage by returning to Jamaica to enact social change. The main character is trying to search for her African/slave roots. At a different level, the author, Cliff, writes about her position both as woman and Jamaican. Cliff writes,

> To write a complete Caribbean woman, or man for that matter, demands of us retracing the African past of ourselves, reclaiming as our own, and as our subject, a history sunk under the sea, or scattered as potash in the canefields, or gone to bush, or trapped in a class system notable for its rigidity and absolute dependence on color stratification. Or a past bleached from our minds. It means finding the art forms of those of our ancestors and speaking in the patois forbidden us. It means realizing our knowledge will always be wanting. It means

> also, I think, mixing in the forms taught us by the oppressor, undermining his language and co-opting his style and turning it to our purpose (Cliff 1985: 14).

A critique of colonialism is a major theme of Cliff's works; yet race and gender are also represented in her novels.

Cliff's most recent novel, *Free Enterprise* (1993), is a historical piece that explores the untold story of the woman behind John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry. The novel's main character, Mary Ellen Pleasant, or M.E.P., is the author of a mysterious note found on the body of a man called John Brown. The note reads, "The axe is laid at the foot of the tree. When the first blow is struck there will be more money to help. M.E.P" (Cliff 1993: 1). This message was never traced back to its author. With this note as a basis, Cliff imagines a whole story of connections around the accident. While "re-visioning" the history of resistance activist Mary Ellen Pleasant, Cliff also includes historical narratives from other people from colonized nations such as Haiti or Suriname, thus creating a global network of oppressed peoples. By including these stories, Cliff asserts the importance of cultural "mythology" in "re-visioning" the histories of colonized people beyond Eurocentric interpretations.

In addition to her novels, Cliff has three books of collected works; collections of short stories and poetry: *The Land of Look Behind: Prose and Poetry* (1985), *Bodies of Water* (1990), which is the one I analyse in this Thesis, and her most recent collection, *The Store of a Million Items: Stories* (1998). In these collections of short stories, Cliff continues addressing gender and race issues. For example, in *Bodies of water,* there is a story called “A Woman who Plays the Trumpet is Deported” that deals with the impossibility of escaping racial prejudice. At the beginning of the story, Cliff clearly states that the story is based upon and dedicated to Valaida Snow, a black trumpet player who escaped from a Nazi concentration camp. Finally, she died of a cerebral

haemorrhage years later unable to overcome the terrible state in which she lived after this horrifying experience. Apart from writing fiction, Cliff is a prolific essayist with works published in a variety of anthologies. Cliff is the recipient of two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts (1982 and 1989), and has also received fellowships from MacDowell College (1982) and the Massachusetts Artists Foundation (1984).

Cliff's one of most acclaimed characteristic is that of being able to recreate the past from different perspectives to counteract the racist, patriarchal and homophobic structures responsible for contemporary hegemony. Her writing is a process of coming to terms with and overcoming these internal prejudices, so that the oppressive systems that continue today can someday be dismantled. In "Screen Memory", part of *Bodies of Water*, the interaction between past and present is signalled by memory. Memory is constructed as a series of flashbacks that fragment the temporal continuity of the story and give readers a hint of the past experiences of the characters. Therefore, textual boundaries as well as temporal ones become fluid and can be easily crossed. The representation in the story of the "presence of the past" is portrayed like a film in a screen. The first story of the *Bodies of Water* is named "Columba", the only one set in Jamaica and a tale based on symbolism and hidden messages.

Like other female authors such as Toni Morrison, Michelle Cliff attempts to search for the "histories" of those who were traditionally silent. She is concerned with discovering the details of what might have happened in our recent past. In *The Land of Look Behind*, Cliff admits that she is "attracted to places where things are buried" (Cliff 1985:19). She endeavours to search not only for those visible voices but for "the absences and silences of history" (Cliff 1985: 95). Cliff does attempt to rewrite the history of the collective unconscious. As a "white Creole," Cliff deals with the hybrid

nature of identity. Her characters cross boundaries of race, class, gender, and sexuality. There is a clear distinction between colonizer and colonized. Cliff is committed to the rewriting of history and the recovery of unknown stories of the colonized to stand with and against the well-known stories of the colonizer. In Spivak's words (1999: 415), she describes the "varieties of agency" that are the basis of postcolonial struggles to establish the identity and dignity of the previously colonised subject. Michelle Cliff herself states that the damage done to societies that suffered the illnesses of race distinction and hierarchy as "insane" (Toland-Dix 2004: 1). Cliff has recently died of liver failure on the 12th June 2016. Since her partner, Adrienne Rich passed away in 2012; she had not published anything new.

In the following chapters, I analyse short stories by both authors, Cliff and Senior from a postcolonial perspective but also considering their work as feminist alternatives to traditional history, as in all their stories both authors deal with gender and racial issues. They also show clearly how being women influences their narratives and their versions of reality.

Chapter One: Postcolonial Theory: Olive Senior's "Swimming in the Ba'ma Grass" and Michelle Cliff's "Columba".

The theoretical framework this dissertation is based upon is post-colonialism, to be analysed as a movement occurring simultaneously with postmodernism. Whereas postmodernism emerged in the United States, and then spread to Europe, former colonies developed their own movement with similar characteristics in terms of form and theme. The fact that both Olive Senior and Michelle Cliff belong to a former colony determines their evolution both as regards to their treatment of history and identity.

The notion of postcolonialism emerged to counteract colonialism in art and culture. In general terms, it refers to the writings produced in former colonies after their independence. Salman Rushdie's statement; "The Empire writes back to the Centre" points out that after post-independence, former colonial subjects began to write about issues concerning the evolution of these countries from the perspective that for years had been silent (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989: 1). Postcolonial literature is, in general terms, a label used to refer to the works of writers who lived and wrote in colonised countries, though not restricted merely by the British Empire. Terms such as "Commonwealth" and "Third World" are no longer considered appropriate. Yet, the use of the term "postcolonialism" is not accurate in every context, as little consensus has been reached regarding its definition. Postcolonial critics usually analyse texts focusing on the discourse used by postcolonial writers, considering how they modify and subvert traditional discourse. In relation to this, Ania Loomba, in her work *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (1998), argues that the term itself is the subject of an ongoing debate. She points out that because colonialism is over and "the descendants of once-colonised peoples live everywhere, the whole world is postcolonial" (Loomba 1998: 7). Loomba suggests that this debatable question can be resolved by thinking of postcolonialism as not just what comes after colonialism, but rather in a more flexible

way as “the contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism” (Loomba 1998: 12). In other words, it can be solved by thinking about how the colonizing culture distorts and displays the colonized as inferior, and how its discourse shapes texts from a position of power. In relation to the cultural scope of Postcolonial Studies, David Scott states the following:

> Postcolonial Studies (or discourse or theory or criticism or whatever) is, after all a subspecies of social and cultural constructionism…It drew its identity from the (largely Foucauldian) program of unmasking Eurocentric essentialisms at work in the West’s representations of non-European ideas and behaviors (Scott in Loomba *et al*. 2005: 389)

One of the main concerns of Postcolonial Studies is the way history and culture are constructed, using literature as a means of cultural subversion. The contrast between the traditional perspective and the point of view of those who were silenced by that perspective creates the effect of cultural substitution.

The study of colonialism and literature has proved to be problematic. The idea that history is constructed upon texts opens up an important alternative way of looking at it. Similarly, historical accounts as textual processes involve ideological strategies in the same manner that fiction does. Historiographic metafiction, by considering history as subtexts of postcolonial texts, seems to provide a precise interpretation of certain perspectives. Tobias Döring (2002: 3) specifies that “the highly contentious term ‘postcolonial’” for practical purposes can be understood as “pointing to the issue of historical echoes and intertextual memories in contemporary Caribbean writing”. He then argues that dominant discourses may be seen “to be connected to the other narratives against which they define themselves” (Döring 2002:13). The best way to map all the different connections and transgressions is through intertextuality. Yet, according to this critic, in the case of postcolonial authors the metaphors of memory and

shared culture operate inversely: certain notions and conventions are very difficult to reinvent (Döring 2002: 14).

As explained in detail in the following chapter, Loomba suggests that representing "the other" as the colonized inferior has helped imperialism establish its identity as opposed to the identities of the colonized subjects. They create the dichotomy of the insider verses the outsider to justify their position in the colony. Loomba uses the term "hybridity" to refer to uncertain identities created by colonialism, (the concept of "hybridity" is also elaborated in the next chapter of this Thesis). Colonial stereotyping is created using race, gender and social *stata*. The creation of archetypes reinforces the idea of "otherness" and situates Britain at the centre, so the colonies and their exotic subjects, therefore, remain peripheral.

Postcolonial critics analyse literature focusing on the discourse used by writers in order to modify traditional discourse. Authors confront canonical British literature to tackle colonialism as well as race and gender issues. Usually postcolonial authors try to challenge the idea that the colonized subject is portrayed as inferior. They try to subvert colonial discourse in shaping their identities from a Western perspective as a tool of empowerment. Postcolonialism tries to incorporate the colonized subject into the history of his or her country. The decentering element shared with postcolonialism is based on the idea of giving voice to those traditionally muted. Authors self-reflect upon the construction of their texts as challenging the mainstream. In an essay called, "Construction of Postcolonial Studies", David Scott states that:

> Consequently, it seems hard to deny that the concept of empire provides a more appropriate framing device for the study of colonialism. After all, Europe too, was transformed by the colonial project; it was not merely the agent of changes in its colonies but also an object of changes coming from them. Therefore, Europe ought not in turn to be treated as if it were the space of socially constructed discourses and identities, a space of "invention", the same sort of

> anti-essentialist gaze should be directed at Europe (Scott in Loomba *et al*. 2005: 395).

Scott wonders whether considering colony and metropole as similar social constructions can constitute a valid argument in dealing with postcolonial issues. He argues that doing it would clarify certain "ambiguities, contingencies, hybridities and other such subtleties commended by the social constructionist" (Scott in Loomba et al. 2005: 397). For him, it is necessary to take into account the influence of the colonizing project on both sides, colonized subject and colonizer, and it is not possible to compare the construction of the colony and the metropole because one has been constructed as a part of the colony's history using the discourse of the invader.

Many critics signal the importance of language in postcolonial literature since English is the language used by postcolonial authors in order to create their texts. English is also regarded both as the language of civilization and the language of the dominant discourse. These authors employ English to recount their stories to incorporate themselves into the conventions of literary and cultural criticism. They embrace the prevalent language and its rules as weapons to challenge the dominant discourse that had previously isolated them as "the other". In a conversation between Prospero and Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the latter complains about the way his European Lord Prospero taught him language and science but enslaved him and dispossessed him of the island on which he was born: "You taught me language, and my profit on't is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you for learning me your language!" (Shakespeare [1610-11] 1954: Act I, Scene II, line 320). Caliban is asking Prospero why he has taught him the language if he did not expect him to use it. And then of course, there is the matter of original ownership of the island. Thanks to language, Caliban is capable of critically questioning his status on the island on which he was born, and his position in relation to Prospero. The ironic use of the language of

the outsiders helps them create their identity as racial others. Literature is said to have passed through three different stages; the one in which the colonized subject is described by colonizers, the second one in which there occurs an ontological split and even though we do not get the voice of the colonized population, we know about their experiences from people living close to them, and finally the third stage, in which the colonized subject ironically uses the language of oppression, English, to tell us their experiences and portray their own identity. The voice of the colonized subject appears as an alternative to that of the conqueror. The colonized subject writing about the process of colonization and the experiences derived from it becomes the ironic other. There is neither White nor Western, and contribute with new ideas and perspectives about the colonizing process.

According to DeHay (1998), the most significant features of postcolonialism overlap with the basic tenets of postmodernism. This critic mentions five characteristics common both to postcolonialism and postmodernism: 1) a decentering and historising of the subject, 2) an employment of textual strategies to subvert the dominant discourse, 3) the presence of deconstructive strategies, 4) a questioning of history, and 5) a rejection of universals. Postcolonial discourse is based upon the representation of those belonging to peripheral cultures; those unvoiced by the traditional Western discourse. The historical representation of the other is related to the ontological issues postmodernism deals with such as the portrayal of reality and the incorporation of different selves depending on these realities. The world is broken into different languages and nations which are not clearly defined because of the interference caused by one to the other, the dominant one and the submissive one, and vice versa. Identities, nationalities, and languages are represented as fragmented in contrast to the dominant traditional discourse. The colonial subject is placed in history avoiding Western

standards. History is included in postcolonial writing and the fictional status of it is permanently questioned. History is deconstructed by the incorporation of different perspectives that question how history is traditionally transmitted.

The way postcolonial and postmodern authors deal with their texts is also something both trends have in common and it is mentioned by DeHay as one relevant characteristic: the employment of textual and deconstructive strategies in order to subvert the dominant discourse. The main strategies employed by these authors are the use of intertextual parody and historiographic metafiction. Both strategies help authors criticize traditional standards and perspectives. Postcolonial authors try to ironically challenge the traditional representation of themselves as others. There is a rejection of universal Eurocentric representation:

> In order to resist, we must remind ourselves that it should not be possible, in principle, to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering the imperialism, understood as England's social mission, was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English. The role of literature in the production of cultural representation should not be ignored (Spivak 1999: 113).

In his famous poem "White Man's Burden" (1899), Ruyard Kipling presents a Euro-centric view of the world. His view assumes that White people have an obligation to rule over and encourage the cultural development of people from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds, until they can take their place in the world by fully adopting Western ways. The term "White man's burden" can be interpreted, within the context in which it was written, as a metaphor for a condescending view of non-Western cultures and traditions. Imperialism has not only been political, but also cultural. Kipling's burden for the White man can also be understood as a charitable view, assuming that wealthy nations have a moral duty to help the poorer ones. European countries used the idea of spreading civilization as a justification for taking over land and exploiting the people and resources for their own benefit. Spivak herself argues that the first time she

wrote about resisting colonial representation, imperialism and its use of literature as the cultural representation of England to the English were crucial aspects. She adds that later on she began to notice how postcolonial feminists criticised that feminism reproduced the axioms of imperialism. Spivak exemplifies this axiom with two texts celebrated by feminism: *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brönte, and *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. She argues that '"the native subaltern female" is excluded from any share in the emerging norm' (Spivak 1999: 117). Contrarily to this, I contend in this Thesis that both Senior and Cliff try to provide us with a feminist account of their female characters, not reproducing canonical models. This point is developed further in Chapter Five.

In her critical work, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason,* Spivak states that her analysis is based on the printed book, rather than on the author, and recognizes that by doing so, she ignores deconstruction (Spivak 1999: 115). This is an uncommon approach to postcolonial texts, where the author and their historical background together with the way they are represented are crucial. In fact, deconstruction is another characteristic shared by both postmodernism and postcolonialism: authors deconstruct their texts by fragmenting them, and time and space are fragmented in order to create a sense of uncertainty. Time is no longer chronological. There is a need to revisit the past in order to understand the present, and both time periods are mixed so that no detail of either one goes missing. This phenomenon occurs in most of the stories under analysis in this Thesis. Space is also fragmented as the narrator takes readers to different settings depending on the time period in which each story takes place. Readers find themselves both inside and outside the main character's mind. It almost seems like the stories are a game played between the author's own personal experiences and the narrators that tell them. It is as if a manipulative agent creating a sense of confusion in order to better portray the fragmented self of the main character: usually characters are contrasted as

White or Black, rich or poor, British or Native. There are certain aspects in their past that complicate their individual development. As the plots progress, the reader manages to reconstruct the events that have occurred. This circumstance confers Cliff and Senior with the opportunity of addressing issues related to the authority of texts. Through the voice of the narrator, the author is giving herself the opportunity of positioning herself in relation to particular aspects of her native country in a specific period of time. The main character seems to be the alter ego of the narrator, as if the narrator had already thought, said, or lived the words and situations relayed in the story.

Postcolonial critics analyse literature focusing on the discourse used by writers in order to modify traditional discourse. Authors confront canonical British literature to tackle colonialism as well as race and gender issues. Postcolonial authors usually challenge the idea that the colonized subject is portrayed as inferior. They subvert colonial discourse as it has shaped their identities from a Western perspective as a tool of empowerment. Postcolonialism incorporates the colonised subject into the history of his or her country. The decentering element shared with postcolonialism is based on the idea of giving voice to those traditionally muted. Authors self-reflect upon the construction of their texts as challenging the norm. Loomba suggests: "The idea that historical processes and practices can be analysed by looking at them as "texts" has proved to be both enabling and problematic" (Loomba 1998: 94). The fact that history is discursively constructed makes us wonder whether literature is influenced by reality or reality by literature. Postcolonialism questions what is "real" and what is "ideological". We need to recognize colonial discourse in order to be able to understand the challenges faced by postcolonial authors. In *Translations* by Brian Friel (1981), the colonial struggle in Ireland is transformed into a struggle based on language. Even though paradoxically the whole play is written in English, Irish characters are supposed to

speak in Gaelic. This helps readers reflect upon the legacy of colonialism in the cultural tradition of the colonized countries. Therefore, mutual understanding becomes impossible. The impossibility of linguistic understanding represents the distance that exists between colonisers and colonised subjects.

Michelle Cliff's short story, "Columba", is a tale wrought with symbolism and hidden messages. The plot line develops around a Black teenage servant named after the Latin word for 'dove', Columba. The whole story hints at colonialism and the identity troubles it provokes among the different characters, as well as to the idea of crossing certain lines in life and suffering the unavoidable consequences. The most obvious connection is the ironic use of a name which calls to mind Christopher Columbus, the first coloniser and founder of America and imperialism. The story is told by a first person narrator who recounts the events as he experiences them. The narrator was twelve when the events transpired and it is from this perspective that we hear about them. The young age of the narrator and his poor understanding of the events at the time mark the development of the story. From the very beginning, the reader has to come to terms with the circumstances and has to be able to combine the information they receive with their own knowledge. This creates interplay between the information given and the elements that have to be interpreted as hidden messages. For example, the idea that the narrator at the time the story develops did not know the meaning of "paedophilia" leaves particular facets of this passage unveiled:

> Charlotte's shouts reached Columba in the kitchen. He was attempting to put together a gooseberry fool for the mistress's elevenses. The word paedophile smacked the stucco of the corridor between them, each syllable distinct, perversion bouncing furiously off the walls. I had heard- who hadn't? – but the word was beyond me. I was taking Latin, not Greek (Cliff 1990: 18).

The boy was probably still too innocent to know the meaning of the word at the time the story develops, but certainly would have known at the time of the retelling. He clearly

says he did not know what it meant but at the same time he is obviously conveying the negative nature of both the word and its meaning. He knows it is a Greek word and at the time he was studying Latin; and by saying "perversion bouncing furiously", it is apparent that he comprehends the nature of the word Charlotte was uttering. The word might be beyond him at the time, but definitely he can understand it as an adult who is narrating the story. Here the narrator is acting as a manipulative agent who tries to make readers aware of the way he perceived things when they happened, but at the same time knows the story, all the details, how it starts and how it ends, what the consequences were, and how the characters behaved when they had to deal with certain situations. The narrator knows perfectly well the meaning of the word "paedophilia," and so do their readers.

When the narrator is describing his aunt's room, he says everything was pink or "so it seems now, at this distance":

> Almost all was pink in that room, so it seemed; so it seems now, at this distance. The lace trim around the neck of the nighties was not pink; it was yellowed and frazzled, practically absent. Thin wisps of thread which had once formed flowers, birds, a spider's web…Charlotte was also given to drink vast amounts of water from the crystal carafes standing on her low bedside table, next to her Informational Please almanac- she had a fetish for detail but no taste for reading- linen hankies scented with bay rum, and a bowl of soursweet tamarind balls…Her room, her pink expanse, smelled of urine and bay rum and the wet sugar which bound the tamarind balls. Ancestral scents. (Cliff 1990: 13).

At first, the narrator states that everything was pink, or so it seemed, from what he remembers, as if nothing was ever really clear in his mind, and at the same time he is providing us with a careful and detailed description of specific aspects of his aunt's room: the yellowing of the nighties, the title of his aunt's book, and even the smell of it. Therefore, is the narrator a reliable one or not? Does he give us enough information to complete the story? Are we biased by our experience and knowledge? The narrator knows everything and, apparently, remains an outsider; he is voluntarily establishing a

distance between the time in which the events occurred and the time in which he tells us the story. Yet, this whole process constitutes a further manipulation of the reader. At times, the reader appears to know more than the characters.

Apparently, the narrator manages to control every thought, word and action of the characters so as to involve the reader in the story; but up to what point are readers controlled, too? The narrative follows a pattern that may seem to involve readers fully as builders of the story; yet, information is only given at the narrator's choosing. Therefore, the reader must fill in all the gaps in the story that are left incomplete, unfortunately never as he or she wishes, but rather at the whim of the narrator. This strategy transforms the narrative into an open-ended one, with many different interpretations. In addition, the readers' knowledge plays an important role, too; the narrator takes for granted that the readers' experiences and life knowhow will play an important role in interpreting certain events. The narrator is conscious of the fact that we are already biased. This is the reason why he chooses when and how to give us the information.

The narrator, as he himself tells us, was left by his parents in the care of an aunt and her Cuban lover in Kingston. His aunt, Charlotte, is British, a pink rose, as he describes her:

> When I was twelve my parents left me in the hands of a hypocondrial aunt and her Cuban lover, a ham radio operator… This woman, whose name was Charlotte, was large and pink and given to wearing pink satin nighties – flimsy relics, pale from age…Years of washing in hard water with brown soap had made the nighties loose, droop, so that Charlotte's huge breasts slid outside, suddenly, sideways, pink falling on pink like ladylike camouflage, but for her livid nipples…Her hair stuck flat against her head, bobbed and straightened, girlish bangs as if painted on her forehead…As she drank, so did she piss, ringing changes on the walls of chamber pots lined under the bed, all through the day and night (Cliff 1990: 13).

Charlotte is described as a 'pink rose' and her pinkness is clearly emphasised. Everything about her is pink, from her body camouflaged under pink nighties to her own room. The narrator does not even see her as White, but rather as pink. She is described this way ironically. Paradoxically, the proper British woman has been traditionally described as a pink rose (symbol of femininity, love, and also of England, represented by a rose) as something positive and desirable. Yet, in the boy's description of his aunt, nothing really positive can be found. Even though the colour pink may represent desire and female sexuality, Charlotte is not at all portrayed this way. On the contrary, she is portrayed as someone whose smell and image are totally decadent and undesirable. The narrator even says that "no one could love those breasts" falling flat from the dressing gown.

Apart from that, she is described as degenerate and lacking taste. In the opinion of the narrator, her former Cuban lover, Juan Antonio, only lives with her because he doesn't want to go back to Cuba in "all his hyphenated splendour". It is ironic how Juan Antonio describes himself as a hyphenated being. He uses the word 'splendour' with all its positive connotations to refer to himself as someone whose identity is not complete. His identity contains a hyphen, he is a split self; the other. He is a stranger in a colonised country and lives with a woman who represents colonisation and Englishness. He is the racial other in the culprit of colonialism; Charlotte's place. According to him, both the boy and he remain there "on sufferance, unrelated dependants" (Cliff 1990:15). The relationship between Charlotte and Juan Antonio represents a reversal of roles. Charlotte symbolises power, money, influence and colonialism. She owns land, has a clear national identity, and belongs to a community. Juan Antonio is an outsider in a foreign land; he does not own anything and depends completely upon Charlotte's will. He is not free, and neither is the narrator. Patriarchy and colonialism in this case are

imparted by way of a woman. Her adherence to the British crown is portrayed in the story:

> Her small house was a cliché of colonialism, graced with calendars advertising the coronation of ER II, the marriage of Princess Margaret Rose, the visit of Alice, Princess Royal…The house sat on top of a hill in Kingston, surrounded by an unkempt estate- so unkempt as to be arrogant, for this was the wealthiest part of the city, and the largest single track of land (Cliff 1990: 15-16).

Charlotte is the perfect representation of the British Empire. Physically, she is a 'pink rose', a paradigm of British femininity and she lives in a house in which everything is decorated with Old World taste. She appears to feel proud of her origins. She is the colonial being trying to impose her own cultural view upon the rest. She owns real estate: her world is like a small representation of the British Empire.

Both the narrator and Juan Antonio are under Charlotte's rule in her small colonial microcosm. The narrator wonders why, and reaches the conclusion that in his case it is because "Charlotte owed his grandmother something" and Juan Antonio "for whatever reason he and she might have", that escaped his teenage mind. They both suffer from the burden of colonialism in the form of Charlotte and the whole British community in Kingston. According to her, Juan Antonio has no "marketable skills for the British Crown Colony" and the girls at school laugh at the narrator's American accent and call him "salt". The two of them are trapped in a world to which they do not belong, but are forced to accept it as they do not have any other choice but to stay.

Father Pierre also stands for patriarchal domination in the story. He is a priest who comes to St Ann from French Guiana. He represents European power, and in many respects, his power is totally different from Charlotte's. On the one hand, Charlotte clearly believes in her superiority as the colonising subject, and shows it; with her appearance, her house, the way she behaves, and her beliefs. On the other hand, Father

Pierre tries to deceive the community of Blacks in Jamaica making them believe he is there to help them and to show them valuable things by pretending he has got no power at all. The narrator describes how when Father Pierre arrives, he is embraced by the whole community because he "talked to them of God, dredging his memory for every tale he had been told" (Cliff 1990: 17).

Apparently this was convincing enough for the people in St Ann, who according to the narrator "cannot tell a confessor from a convict" (Cliff 1990: 17). When a local newspaper discovers the truth about Father Pierre, the congregation in St Ann still wonder how this could have happened if "he was White and knew God" (Cliff 1990: 17). The narrator is ironic about the situation; again, he is trying to manipulate the readers. A twelve-year old boy could not have been ironic about such an issue; he is creating a playful interaction between what we know and what he tells us. He is saying that the people in St Ann could not believe what Father Pierre did (without having really told us yet what all is about) because being White and a priest is supposed represent the necessary standards for being placed at the top of society. Being White and a server of God, stands for decency and honour. Father Pierre contributes to this image. He tells the people in the congregation that he had been the assistant to the confessor on "Devil's Island"; a name that is symbolic in of itself. The priest comes from "Devil's Island" disguised as a pure and candid being, who spreads goodness and teaches people the word of God and other necessary things such as reading and writing. "Devil' Island" is a clear allusion to the Fallen Angel, the Devil. According to the Bible, the Devil always appears in disguise to spread evil. Yet, man's duty is to interpret the different tokens that may appear so as to find out he is the Devil. Finally, the priest too falls because he is discovered and loses all his power.

He is like the Devil itself in disguise: a White priest who deceives everybody with his appearance. This appearance serves him well to give way to his most terrible vices. The narrator gives us hints of how the priest gets close to Columba's mother and family to get close to the boy. He teaches his mother, Winsome, "to write her name, read a ballot, and know God" (Cliff 1990: 17). He also convinces her to change the boy's name. He baptises the ten-year old boy who until that time had been called Junior, and changes is name to Columba: "Why honour an un-named sire? Father Pierre spoke to Winsome. 'Children' the priest intoned, 'the children become their names' (Cliff 1990: 17). So, Father Pierre named the boy after the Saint buried on Iona, discoverer of the monster in the Loch. In turn, the boy is the discoverer of the monster that dwells within the priest.

The boy suffers silently from sexual abuse until the priest's secret is discovered. As the priest had said, children become their name. He gives his victim the name of Columba for all the connotations it implies. Columba is a dove, a white and innocent one, like an angel; this probably is another aspect of the priest's perversion. Giving the boy this name he is emphasising innocence, purity and virginity. Something a pederast may find totally irresistible. Father Pierre and his attitude symbolise the abuse and domination colonisers traditionally exercised against natives. Father Pierre is White, European and represents patriarchy, while Columba is a Black, Jamaican boy with a feminine name who is subjugated by the powerful priest. Sexual abuse represents this subjugation physically; the priest preying upon the helpless and innocent boy who silently endures the situation. Silence is another important aspect to consider when talking about sexual abuse. The boy is in no position to denounce the priest's abuses. He is at the bottom of the social hierarchy and his young age probably makes him feel even less confident in sharing his suffering with anyone. The Devil in disguise uses all his

powers to obtain the trust of the community and they all believe blindly in his goodness and devotion to the poor. Sexual abuse requires a lot of silence in order to be carried out. One would not exist without the other. As long as the boy remains silent, the priest can abuse him; what is unknown to others has virtually never happened.

Columba, the teenage Black boy, is the story's protagonist. As soon as the narrator introduces the characters, Columba becomes the centre of attention. The boy is responsible for cleaning the house in Charlotte's little empire. As the narrator ironically explains, "a more magnanimous landowner would have had a staff of two, even three, but Charlotte swore against being taken advantage of" (Cliff 1990: 17). This is why Charlotte pays Columba in the form of some food: "a case of condensed milk, two dozen tins of sardines, five pounds of flour, several bottles of cooking oil, permission to squat on Charlotte's cane-piece – fair exchange" (Cliff 1990: 16). For Charlotte, Columba becomes 'Colin' because "she insisted on Anglicization", another hint of her colonial power. She explains that his name is foolish, feminine and was given to him by a paedophile (Cliff 1990: 18). The boy was called Junior by his family, Father Pierre gives him the name of Columba, people call him Collie and finally Charlotte changes it to Colin, insisting that it is stupid to name "a Black boy after a white bird" (Cliff 1990: 18). The whole situation creates an identity problem for the young, Black servant. He cannot identify himself as a whole individual while everyone keeps changing his name at their whim. He represents the suffering of the colonised subject; the boy cannot develop as an individual because he has not got a name, an identity. He does not even enjoy the category of human being; his mother exchanges him for food, Charlotte uses him as a slave, and the priest sexually abuses him under the guise of giving him protection. Like Juan Antonio, Columba is a "hyphenated being"; someone who does not possess a complete identity. He does not even have a constant name with which to

identify himself. Similar to what was done in the times of slavery; all those who want to own the boy change his name as it suits them; the priest to satisfy his sexual fantasies, and Charlotte to make it sound more English. The boy is objectified throughout his whole life; first his mother trades him for food, then Charlotte employs him as a slave, and finally the priest uses him as a sexual object. None of these crimes allow the boy to have neither rights nor human characteristics.

Columba is isolated. The boy is taken from his birthplace to Kingston and is lonely in Charlotte's house as a slave; he takes care of all domestic duties and is not permitted to speak to the rest of inhabitants of the house (the narrator is forbidden to speak to him except on household matters). In her little empire, Charlotte condones slavery. Cliff creates a small world to portray the decadent way of life of colonisers on their plantations and the way they used to treat their slaves. The author ironically depicts the foolishness of the empire using Charlotte's small estate. It is a perfect portrayal of all the elements one can encounter on a plantation, but on a smaller scale. It has land, a landlord, and a slave who takes care of everything. Columba is treated like slaves were in earlier times. He is secluded and his name was changed so that he does not have a clear identity, making him no better than the property owned by his landlady.

The narrator and Columba, both teenagers at the time of the story, see each other secretly. Their relationship is not a proper and acceptable one. Every time Juan Antonio goes to town and Charlotte dozes, they meet up with one other. They sit behind an old guava tree and talk for hours. Apart from Charlotte, the other characters in the story are similarly trapped in her little estate. Juan Antonio's only exit is to go to town and share his time with the people at the bar and the prostitutes in Raetown. He also listens to his radio and leafs through his magazines as distractions from his reality. The boys' only escape is each other's company. The narrator cannot move freely and go to town as Juan

Antonio does. He goes to school every day but there he is considered an outsider and is not accepted by his classmates because he is a foreigner.

Columba is like another piece of Charlotte's property. He is not allowed to leave her residence. All of the characters are at Charlotte's mercy; the consequences of living in a colonial regime are exemplified by this situation. She uses and abuses them all as she wants, they are not free to leave and she takes advantage of them. As the narrator says, they are all dependants. As a metaphor for colonialism, they want to develop their free will but the powerful colonial force makes them incapable of doing so. Here, the narrator is also showing his manipulative technique. How can he portray those living on Charlotte's estate as a clear criticism of colonialism if he is only an innocent boy? It is apparent that the narrator is trying to convince the readers to believe his own version of the situation.

Regardless of all the difficulties, the two boys maintain a fluid friendship. They entertain each other with stories and Columba is delighted with the narrator's tales of America. The telling of stories and the closeness of the two boys is totally different from the relationship that Columba has with the priest. The boy behaves like an equal to him and treats him as an independent individual. He does not try to own him in any way, he only wants his company. Columba wants to know everything about all the names he knows from the cinema and hears on the radio that he quietly plays in the kitchen. At first the boys meet under the guava tree, but later Columba shows the boy his secret: an abandoned 1930s Rover left in a clearing on Charlotte's property. The car is symbolically full of doves. The two sit among the birds for hours. The car full of doves becomes their sacred place; a place only known by them and in which they can develop their relationship freely. It is the only place in which Columba feels like he can be himself and has an identity. He identifies himself with the doves that can freely live

inside the car without anyone knowing of their existence or disrupting them. One day, when Charlotte's car breaks down, she suggests that Juan Antonio fix the old Rover. When he arrives at the clearing he finds the dovecote inside the car. The boys' secret is discovered. Charlotte becomes angry because her property is the soul of bounty. She feels she has lost control because there is something in her little world she does not know about. Columba is given the task of wringing all the birds' necks except for three that they can cook for that evening's supper. He does as he is told. When the narrator finds him carrying out his task, he is weeping heavily. He stays with him while the deed is being done.

The discovery and subsequent killing of the doves is the most important scene in the story. It contains many different messages and symbols, with different meaning for each of the characters. For Charlotte, the birds have to be killed as they represent "a colony within a colony" (Cliff 1990: 22). No one, not even the birds, can camp freely on her property. Everything that is not under her control is understood as a threat to her power: "her trees bore heavily. Her chickens lay through hurricanes. Edible creatures abounded!"(Cliff 1990: 21). For the two boys, the car with the doves is regarded as a free space where they can proceed unfettered and develop both their freedom and imagination. It is a special world where they can be themselves, hidden from the powerful figure of Charlotte, of colonial power, of adults. For Columba, the car with the doves does not only represent a refuge and a free space, but also the only scraps of his identity that he ever had. Paradoxically, he identifies with the birds, as they are free to be wherever they want. Columba is everything but free, and to mimic the birds' freedom is his most important desire. When he has to kill them, it is as if he was killing many things: among them his hopes of a better life and his dream to be free.

Traditionally, doves have represented different ideas. The principal and the most wide spread notion is peace. On a small scale this symbol also appears in the story. First, the dovecote inside the car is like an oasis within Charlotte's empire. There, there is no oppression, or subjugation, or dependence. Inside the dovecote, the two boys can develop their free will and break the ties they have with Charlotte. It is a hidden place where they can be children and enjoy each other's company. It is also their love nest. There is an implicit sexual relationship between the two boys. They have physical contact and flirt when they are in the car. Yet, their sexual closeness is totally different from the one Columba has experienced before with the priest. In this case, Columba and the narrator are on the same level, by exploring their first sexual drives and desires.

The discovery of the car with the dovecote by Juan Antonio provokes its subsequent colonisation. Nothing within the colony can remain unconquered. This space is described as something white, pure, filled with the doves' sweet coos. It is like a white flag, a place that has not been spoiled by the dominion of colonialism, by the different interests it seeks. It remains intact, as the only post of peace and freedom. When Columba starts killing the birds, they do not fly away; they continue to remain calm and content:

> I found him sitting in the front seat of the dovecote. A wooden box was beside him, half-filled with dead birds. The live ones did not scatter, did not flee. They sat and paced and cooed, as Columba performed his dreadful task (Cliff 1990: 22).

One may say that they do not voluntarily leave the place where they have lived freely because this would force their subjugation to the imposed system. They simply let the boy do his job. The birds trust him; he is one of them. He has never before been harmful to them.

Doves also stand for innocence and purity. This may be the reason why the boys feel so free among them. They mix with the birds and do not feel the repulsion adults feel towards them. Columba identifies with them so much he is almost like a dove in a boy's body. He represents innocence throughout the whole story. Father Pierre's sexual abuse puts him in this position at the beginning. He is pure and innocent until the priest gets in his way. As teenagers the boys have to make the journey from adolescence to adulthood. As Columba kills the birds with the narrator's arm around him, the two boys are witnessing the death of their childhood and the birth of a new stage in their development in which secret places and codes are no longer acceptable. They have finally been conquered by Charlotte's power, which has made them kill the only hope they have, and destroy the only space where they can breathe freely. The author is showing us how colonialism tries hard to squash the innocence and freedom of the people it subdues by leaving them in isolation, lacking in expectations, and trapped in a world they do not recognise as theirs. The eliminating of the doves represents death, crime and also the end of something. Colonialism traditionally has killed the culture and the identity of the culture it has defeated. On a more personal level, it destroys the identity and the spirit of those who are colonised. This leads them to hopelessness; to think that their dreams and expectations are unreachable, and that they will die as captives.

"Swimming in the Ba'ma Grass" by Olive Senior is told by Miss Lynn, a woman whose husband has just been shot dead. Readers access the story through her perspective and the idea that lies underneath is that of sudden death on an ordinary day. She is hanging the clothes she has just washed in the line when someone informs her that her husband has just been shot. The story begins just before this event occurs; Miss Lynn tells us how her husband likes to lie on the grass and pretend he is swimming:

> …SWIMMING? IN the Ba'ma grass? Who ever heard of such a thing and a big man at that? Dress in him work clothes same way, him khaki shirt and him old stain –up jeans pants and him brand new Ironman water boots that I did tell him was too big for him, this old man playing the fool in the middle of the pasture, lying there pretending he swimming with his two hands out there like he swimming with his two hands out there like he doing the crawl and his feet kicking. Look how he playing the fool till one of his boots fall off and is what that red thing like blood stain up the back of him brand new khaki shirt, is only one time it wash and look how him gone stain it up now. And is why that police boy there, the one Shannon, why he standing there with his gun in him hand and that other one from the station, Browning, standing beside him, and the two of them watching my husband there making a fool of himself pretending he swimming? (Senior 1995: 83).

Arnold was born by the sea and liked it a lot. Yet, Miss Lynn did not like to live by the sea because she is Black and the people back in St Elizabeth never admitted her as one of them: "me never like those red people… And them never like me, that's the fact, for they just don't like Black people" (Senior 1995: 89). So, she convinced him to move to her father's property. Arnold pretends he is swimming sometimes lying on the grass to tease Lynn, which makes her laugh. One day while he was doing it, Shannon, a policeman, shoots him dead. From this moment on, Miss Lynn starts to go back in time until we get the whole story. From the very beginning the author is creating narrative tension. Readers have the voice of a woman narrator who is asking herself several questions about how things have come to this end. The narrator repeats that her brain is not working as it should and that she cannot remember things properly, which makes us question her reliability as narrator. She is telling us her side of the story; which is the side of events the author wants us to get. By saying it, the narrator is implying that certain details have been omitted because she is the one telling us the story; her story, the story of her husband and of her people. She is trying to tell us that some things are pure conjecture because they belong on the other side of the events. The author wants to tell us how during the time of colonisation in her country, Jamaica, certain abuses on the part of the White colonisers where committed; how they imposed their supremacy by

means of violence and repression. No one would accuse or disturb a White person and even less if he represented order and power. This issue is quite current in The USA nowadays as it is represented by the movement #blacklivesmatter against police shooting of Black people especially in the southern part of the country.

Miss Lynn and her husband, Arnold, live in a small town taking care of the land she inherited from her father. She works as a cleaning lady at the police station. Arnold is a decent law-abiding man who likes to live peacefully and go to the seaside from time to time because he was born there. One day, Lynn has a quarrel with Shannon, a young policeman at the police station where she works as a cleaner. She gets angry because he treats her badly and she throws a box at him. The other policemen warn her because this young policeman is known for his aggressive behaviour. He has been sent to this small town because he has already killed several people for no apparent reason back in Kingston, but since he knows very influential people, he was never convicted. When Lynn throws the box at him he swears he is going to kill her. From this moment on, Shannon starts bothering her, and Lynn begins to complain about her job and wants to leave. Arnold asks her why she wants to leave a job at which she is regularly paid and in which she seems to be happy. She does not want to tell him but finally she does, so Arnold goes to talk to the sergeant at the station. The sergeant does not say or do anything about the situation, and that is how Shannon ends up free to murder Arnold.

There are several aspects to take into account after reading this story. First, it must be considered that we only get the perspective of one of the characters: a Black woman, and to see how power is represented by a young White policeman. Just as in the previous story with the Church, here, power is represented by another oppressive institution. At this point, it seems relevant to mention Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" (1969). Althusser argues that there are two kinds of

State Apparatuses: the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) and the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). The former includes the "institutions" of the Government: the Administration, the Army, the Police, Courts, Prisons, and etcetera. The latter includes the religious institutions, the system of the different Churches), the educational ISA (the system of the different public and private schools), the familial ISA, the legal ISA, the political ISA, the trade union ISA, the communication ISA (press, radio and television, etc.), and the cultural ISA (Literature, the Arts, sports, etc.). The former "functions massively and predominately by repression (including physical repression); while the latter functions massively and predominately by ideology (Althusser 1969:145). Althusser pays particular attention to the function of the various ISAs, which, even though they work differently, are unified by their common function: preserving the dominant ideology and, thus, the interests of the ruling class (Althusser 1969: 149). Both try to secure the "political conditions of the reproduction of relations of production", which are, according to him, "relations of exploitation" by means of repression ranging from "the most brutal physical force, via mere administrative commands and interdictions, to open and tacit censorship" (Althusser 1969:149-150). The story juxtaposes the positions of the different classes within a society marked by colonisation and therefore, by race and also, in this case, gender. The author employs the language of the colonised in order to create her discourse about the aforementioned issues. Finally, there is also the idea of how an insignificant detail within one's life can mark the development of a series of different circumstances that transforms an ordinary day into a significant one in the life of a particular person.

Senior uses the language of Blacks in Jamaica in order to tell her story. The narrator speaks a specific variety of English; she is a poor, Black, Jamaican woman and therefore her jargon is different from that of the White colonisers. Paradoxically, the

narrator is using the language of the colonisers in order to create her discourse. When compared with that of the Whites, there is a marked difference. Even language signifies a class and race distinction:

> So me don't say nothing. But all the little petty things Shannon doing getting me on my nerves. So I start complain about the job and I tell Arnold I want to leave (Senior 1995: 87).

The character's English can be perfectly understood, but it does not follow the traditional grammatical rules. She does not belong to the colonisers, whose language remains within the standards of correctness, and this is constantly shown in her speech. She uses the language they have imposed upon her, but in the way her people use it. The author is using this way of speaking with a political and social agenda. She tells the story of those who have been usually left out of history and of the traditional recounts of the colonisation process. She has chosen otherness to give us a perspective we have not gotten in the conventional accounts of the empire's expansion. Senior is giving a voice to those who have been systematically muted. She even uses their language: Lynn's language is not the language of the law and order imposed upon Jamaicans. She is not employing the language of patriarchy, but rather that of her people.

Like the story previously analysed, "Columba", this is also a story of abuse. It focuses on how the apparatus of State subjugate people and make their own views of society prevail. Shannon, the policeman, uses his power against Lynn and ultimately against her husband. He knows from his experience that nobody is going to blame him or take any steps to punish him. He represents White patriarchal power. He is well connected, and no one dares to question this, not even the sergeant at the police station. When Lynn told another policeman what happened with the box, she was told that Shannon was not someone to get upset:

> And me did expect him to laugh but he look serious bout the whole thing and say, “Miss Lyn, you have every right to box him. Facety wretch. But Shannon not a man to cross, you know. Them say is six man him kill already in town. Is Enforcer them call him there, you know. And them only send him because town get a little too hot for him right now”. Then him look round before him whisper to me, “Is big man behind him, you know” (Senior 1995: 86).

Shannon is taking advantage of his position the whole time. He does as he pleases back in town because an influential politician backs him. The moment everybody knows who this politician is, Shannon is sent away from Kingston. Yet, in the countryside, there is not much law to enforce and so he starts bullying those who are not in a position to defend themselves. The Black population cannot do anything but keeps quiet in order to stop his abuses. When Lynn throws the box at him he focuses all his anger on her. She is a Black woman and a cleaner; he is a White policeman who is supposed to maintain law and order. At first he begins doing small things to bother her; he steps on the clean floor with his boots covered in mud, spreads grass on her already washed sheets, among other childish pranks. Lynn believes they are immature annoyances that will stop sooner or later. Unfortunately, he keeps on doing them. It is when Arnold reports to the sergeant that Shannon really gets angry and kills him with the certainty that nobody will dare arresting him for it.

The gun here is a symbol of power and patriarchy and Shannon uses it to exemplify White supremacy. With his gun he controls people and he does not hesitate to act violently if his authority is questioned. This is why he has already killed six people back in Kingston. The lives of Jamaicans do not mean anything to him in comparison with maintaining his status and position at the top of the social hierarchy. His gun has served him to impose his point of view and to silence those who do not agree with him. He belongs to an institution that is responsible for maintaining law and order; but of course, only the law and order is that imposed by the British colonisers. The police, therefore, are a symbol of repression and colonisation. Shannon represents this power

taken to the extreme, with guns being a symbol of repression. They are weapons the British conquerors have employed in order to maintain a certain way of life and also to write a part of the history of Jamaica. They are the ones with a say and authority to do so. In contrast to all of this, Senior is providing us with the other side of history. The side of those who do not have the guns and the power to make their voices heard.

Black people know that there are certain limits that cannot be breached when dealing with White authorities. This is why Lynn blames herself for the murder of her husband:

> And is me cause it O God is me responsible for everything that happen in my husband life from he meet me. Is me cause him to be living here, working on the land, something he never want to do for he really wanted was to live by the sea (Senior 1995: 88).

Lynn as well as the whole Black community knows that a small offense against a White person can become something dramatic. She could not control her nerves in a fit of rage, and this ends up having unexpected consequences. Shannon has not killed Lynn, as he promised. Instead he kills Arnold, whom Lynn loves most in life, which is even worse for her. She has lost her lover and she is going to have to live through seeing that her husband's murderer will never be brought to justice. She feels guilty because she knew this from the very beginning and instead of blaming the murderer she blames herself. Lynn knows White people impose their rules upon her and her people and that the law is not equally applied to Whites and Blacks. She knows this murder will not have any consequences for Shannon, and this is why she blames herself for it. The whole Black community has anticipated this type of behaviour and for this she feels responsible for what has happened. If you do not follow the rules imposed by the colonisers, you may be killed, and nobody will care.

Chapter Two: Building Gender and Racial Identities in Postcolonial Countries: "The Glass-Bottom Boat" and "Window" by Olive Senior.

The stories I have chosen to analyse in this chapter deal with the creation of identity in terms of both race and gender. The main characters remain at the edge of a multicultural society, and gender and racial conventions mark their development as individuals. They permanently suffer from the anxiety of choosing what is correct in terms of racial and gender specific roles, and in developing their free will. In the case of "Window", the protagonists have to love each other considering certain limits that have been established by society in relation to the racial hierarchy, colonialism has imposed upon Jamaicans. In "The Glass-Bottom Boat", Eric, a man of white colonial descent, decides to break the mould of the role imposed on him by society. As a white man, he is supposed to lead a life full of common comforts within the social circle assigned to a man of his status. When he decides to love someone outside of it, racial and gender roles become complicated.

Hybridity is at work in both stories to the extent that it creates stereotypes that are not supposed to challenge the roles established by years of colonial occupation. Senior provides a variety of these stereotypes; the poor white girl who can move higher in the social hierarchy because of the racial supremacy of the colonist's descendants, a black man who can only reach a certain position as a worker because his racial condition would never allow him to improve his situation, the white man whose position and status lock him into a conventional life without allowing him to move away from said path, and so on and so forth. There are also many secondary characters, which help readers understand the problems of self-fulfilment from which these main characters suffer, those of which also serve as means of understanding the significance of race and gender in a postcolonial society in contrast to the reality of the main characters.

One of the main issues tackled by postcolonial writers is that of how to construct their identities and the identities of their nations (this last point is elaborated in Chapter Four). Postcolonial theory has always tried to come to terms with these obvious racial and gender differences and the various identities that emerged during and after colonisation. Scholars have theorised about these divergences by using terms such as 'hybridity', 'creolisation', 'mimicry' or 'subalternity', in an attempt to situate both the colonised and the colonial subjects within the scope of the culture created by the empire. Loomba (1998:104) outlines that in order to represent the other as inferior and therefore colonized, there is a need to establish oppositions. These oppositions are crucial in creating the images of both the insider and outsider. Some critics believe that by signalling racial differences in order to counteract traditional stereotypes, we are maybe reproducing them. Loomba uses the term hybridity to refer to uncertain identities created by colonialism. The dichotomy between coloniser and colonised works in relation to race, gender and other social hierarchies. According to her and to other scholars, analyzing the effect of colonialism on the colonised subject creates stereotyping. The colonised native is considered "the other," this perspective has remained peripheral for a long time, and their subject constructions have been based on the preconceptions of the colonisers. Postcolonial discourse transforms Britain into the fragmented centre. In a chapter Loomba entitles "Can the Subaltern Speak?" after the work by Spivak (1987), he wonders whether colonial power has succeeded in silencing the colonised subject, and if the colonised subject can question colonial authority by using a borrowed accent and language. Loomba questions Spivak's suggestion that the voices of the colonised subjects cannot be recovered. Spivak argues that the development of the "subaltern" is complicated by the imperialist project (Spivak 1987: 78). She adds that postcolonial intellectuals, after analyzing the representation of the

colonial subjects both in historical accounts and in literature, “learn that their privilege is their loss” (Spivak 1987: 82).

The voice of the colonized subject appears as an alternative to that of the conqueror. Therefore, the colonised subject writing about colonization becomes the ironic other, because of being neither white nor from the West. The experiences derived from this “otherness” contribute to the creation of an innovative corpus of stories in which traditional voices are displaced. Literature written on both sides inscribes aspects of the “other” culture, creating new genres, ideas and identities (Loomba 1998: 70). It serves well to contrast and compare both perspectives; the one absorbed by the dominant culture in which the colonized subject is seen as “the other,” and the one in which “the other” inverts itself and challenges his or her own portrayal as such. In his work, *Caribbean-English Passages: Intertextuality in a Postcolonial Tradition*, Tobias Döring talks about how the English spoken in the Caribbean can be seen as performing textual and cultural conflicts (Döring 2002: 9). He then analyses how the conquerors used the English language as a means of cultural estrangement. The English language representing the colonial and paternal world was violently imposed upon the colonized, maternal Caribbean culture. In this context, imperialism is often compared with patriarchy as oppressive tenets of the dominant culture.

According to Loomba, the “othering” of most of the population as backwards and inferior is due to the opposition of races and also to the attempt at creating an image of “the other” that empowers the position of western civilization (Loomba 1998: 103). Some critics consider that in the process of searching for the historical and ideological construction of the self as “other” we are in danger of reproducing this binary opposition. Centring the peripheral may be a way of establishing a different “otherness,” which goes against the traditional one. As Loomba poses it:

> Literature written on both sides of the colonial divide often absorbs, appropriates and inscribes aspects of the "other" culture, creating new genres, ideas and identities in the process. Finally literature is also an important means of appropriating, inverting or challenging dominant means of representation and colonial ideologies (Loomba 1998: 70).

Here, Loomba talks about literature as a weapon to counteract dominant discourse. Yet, by creating a new version of history that has never been told before, postcolonial authors proposes a different type of "otherness", which creates new identities and opposition. Helen Tiffin, in her essay "Post-Colonial Literatures and Counter-Discourse," points out that post-colonial cultures are hybridised and invoke "an ongoing dialectic between hegemonic centrist systems and peripheral subversion of them" (Tiffin 1987: 3). She implies that it is impossible to recreate a certain cultural identity without considering influence and historical implication. The same culture and subjects are hybrids rather than pure mimicry of the texts representing the colonial experience as told by the colonisers, these texts also serve to counteract this mainstream. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, written in 1952, Frantz Fanon coined the term 'mimicry' to refer to the way in which colonised subjects embraced the white colonisers' culture, one that was considered superior and provided them with more alternatives in a global sense. Fanon argues that it produced a dependent colonial relationship through identification with Western culture as the only possibility to create a representative identity. Homi Bhabha claimed that mimicry made impossible to conceal an identity behind the mask as it objectified the colonial subject behind an artificial representation (Bhabha 1984: 129). For him, this partial gaze is used to mark the difference between the colonisers and the others, creating inappropriate representations:

> Those inappropriate signifiers of colonial discourse- the difference between being English and being Anglicised: the identity between stereotypes which, through repetition, also become different; the discriminatory identities constructed across traditional cultural norms and classifications, the Simian black, the Lying Asiatic- all these are metonymies of presence (Bhabha 1984: 130).

Bhabha explains how mimicry raises the question of the authority of colonial representation, as it encloses the colonised subject within the limits of racial, cultural and national representation, ensuring that the traditional view of the colonisers prevails. He adds that colonial authority as it appears in the notion of mimicry contributes to establish a difference that is incomplete, as it subjugates to colonial power and history:

> In the ambivalent world of the "not quite/not white", on the margins of metropolitan desire, the founding objects of the Western world become the erratic, eccentric, accidental objects trouvés of the colonial discourse- the part-objects of presence. It is then that the body and the book lose their representational authority. Black skin splits under the racist gaze, displaced into signs of bestiality, genitalia, grotesquerie, which reveal the phobic myth of the undifferentiated whole white body (Bhabha 1984: 133).

As the author suggests, to signify otherness is necessary in order to produce fragmented subjectivities; if whiteness represents wholeness, anything which is not white is necessarily fragmented. In another article, "Signs Taken from the Wonders," Bhabha suggests that cultural colonialism produces the reference of discrimination by means of disavowal, with the intention of splitting the subject to emphasise the difference (Bhabha 1985:153).

Some post-colonial scholars claim that colonial discourse has failed to produce stable and fixed identities (Loomba 1998: 105). Homi Bhabha, in his work, "Signs Taken for Wonders" published in *Critical Inquiry*, elaborates on how the literature of the Empire as another symbol of colonial authority has created a double inscription. English texts represented the civilising mission and the power of the empire, yet the "English Book" can only be considered as a signifier of authority within "the traumatic scenario of colonial difference" (Bhabha 1985: 150). He claims that the colonial presence becomes ambivalent in the way it relies on difference and discrimination:

> Such a dis-play of difference produces a mode of authority that is agonistic (rather than antagonistic). Its discriminatory effects are visible in those split

> subjects of the racist stereotype- the simian Negro, the effeminate Asiatic male- which ambivalently fix identity as the fantasy of difference (Bhabha 1985: 150).

By marking the difference, the "English Book" needs to perpetuate certain archetypes that in turn solidify the supremacy of the conqueror. Thanks to this dichotomy, Englishness remains a universal symbol. The colonial space is based upon the separation of origins and essences that are visible by means of race. Skin colour cannot be hidden, yet, this differentiation results in agony because invasion produces hybrid societies. Hybridization produces a "space of separation" that arises through "*Entstellung*," defined as the "process of displacement, distortion, dislocation [and] repetition" (Bhabha 1985: 150). Bhabha explains how this process can be performed by both the colonial power and the colonised subject; the colonial authority seeks to perpetuate its power, and the post-colonial people end up separating themselves from the colonisers. Thus, in order to effectively illustrate a new Jamaican postcolonial society, it is unavoidable to inscribe their texts with a new light so as to properly link both sides.

A clear example of this might be seen in the stories by both Cliff and Senior. They endeavour to deconstruct the stereotype created by colonial discourse and show readers the fragmentation that this unilateral view has created upon the colonised subject. Spivak pointed out:

> It should not be possible to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering that imperialism, understood as England's social mission, was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English (Spivak 1985: 243).

An example of the above-mentioned can be also found in Jean Rhys's novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea.* In contrast to the traditionally marginalized and little-explored character of Charlotte Brönte's *Jane Eyre*, Bertha Mason is given a voice so as to challenge the cultural representation that had always been the norm. This character unfolds to

challenge the original one in *Jane Eyre*, regarded as the model of metropolitan Englishness in Brönte's novel. This fragmentation can also be found in the contrast between some characters created by the authors analysed in this dissertation; Charlotte, for example is described as a pink rose in Michelle Cliff's "Columba", in contrast with the black boy, Columba himself. Brid's mother is also contrasted with Ma Lou in "Window"; as an invalid representing whiteness and imperialism, Ma Lou stands as the other, at the other side of the racial continuum, a black woman who is the descendant of slaves and works for the family. Eric's father is represented in "The Glass Bottom Boat" as a national icon of Britishness, where he stands and acts as the coloniser and rejects his son for having chosen to live differently. Linked to the creation of identities in postcolonial countries some scholars have developed the concept of "hybridity". *Hybrid Talk* is associated with the emergence of post-colonial discourse and the way it questions cultural imperialism. The main theorists of this concept are Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Paul Gilroy. They were the first authors that dealt with the multi-cultural awareness that emerged in the 1980s.

Hybridity refers in biological terms to mixture. From its origins and early definitions in science, it was later employed in linguistics and racial theory in the nineteenth century. The concept of hybridity formulated in the work of Homi Bhabha in the 1980s was foundational in the development of Postcolonial Studies. In the theoretical development of hybridity, the key text is *The Location of Culture* (1994), by Bhabha, where hybridity is presented as a paradigm of colonial anxiety. The principal proposition is the hybridity of colonial identity, which, as a cultural form, proposes the construction of postcolonial societies as a mixture of races, perspectives and ideologies. Although the original, theoretic development of hybridity addressed the narratives of cultural imperialism, Bhabha's work also comprehends the cultural politics of the

condition of being "a migrant" in the contemporary metropolis. Yet, hybridity is no longer only associated with migrant populations and with border towns, he also applies contextually to the flow of cultures and their interactions. In recent times, the figure of the other, usually silent, has urged to speak, in Rushdie's terms in *The Empire Writes Back. Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature*, there is an urge to "write back" in order to disrupt political and ideological central views; thus minorities such as women, 'natives', or in Spivak's words, "subalterns", now claim to speak as others. Bhabha (1985: 153) suggests that resistance is not a political opposition but a sign of cultural difference. Therefore, in postcolonial studies, the other becomes the central issue. Loomba (1998: 173) argues that the idea does not only deal with migrancy, exile and hybridity against cultural roots and authenticity, but also to evaluate the ideological and political identity embedded in the multiple histories of colonialism and postcolonialism.

In relation to theories of hybridity as developed by Bhabha, Edward K. Brathwaite, in his essay, "Creolization in Jamaica," argues that the most important factor in the development of Jamaican society was based upon the stimulus and response of individuals to each other, regardless of their original background (Brathwaite in Ashcroft et al. 2006: 152). This process of mutual influence is what he defines as creolization. According to him, the oppressive nature of slavery should have made the slaves reproduce the white owners' cultural background, yet instead of producing mimicry and the imitation of only European culture, the process of creolization worked both ways. Brathwaite adds that even though the process was cruel, it was also quite creative:

> My own idea of creolization is based on the notion of a historically affected socio-cultural continuum, which (in the case of Jamaica) there were four inter-related and sometimes overlapping orientations. From their several cultural

> bases people in the West Indies tend towards certain directions, positions, assumptions and ideals. But nothing is really fixed and monolithic. Although there is white/brown/black, there are infinite possibilities within these distinctions and many ways of asserting identity (Brathwaite in Ashcroft *et al*. 2006:154)

Although slaves were invisible to the eyes of their masters, they managed to produce a resilient culture based on their experience as former slaves, and were able to develop after emancipation. In contemporary culture, both tendencies are frequently discussed, as authors are constantly addressing issues related to race and nation by revising their past and the evolution of the country as a distinctive culture based on this dichotomy.

Ania Loomba outlines that there is a contradiction at work in the way colonialism attempted to "civilise its others and fix them into perpetual otherness" (1998: 173). In recent years, many studies have been concerned with the ways in which "the other", understood as the colonised subject, has been traditionally represented or altogether excluded. In his essay, "The Cultural Politics of Hybridity" (1995), Robert Young concludes that the main difficulty lies in how to turn "the otherness of the past into the sameness of today" (Young in Ashcroft et al. 2006:161). He argues that it is important to be aware of how much otherness has informed our present. Within this context, hybridity establishes the strategy for maintaining the *status quo*:

> Hybridity thus consists of a bizarre binate operation, in which each impulse is qualified against the other, forcing momentary forms of dislocation and displacement into complex economies of agonistic reticulation (Young in Ashcroft et al. 2006:158)

Young lines with Bhabha in the idea that hybridity is a two-sided operation; we can perceive the presence of authority, and the repetition and displacement of it, at the same time. Both Young and Bhabha emphasise hybridity as a mode of resistance that situates the distorted version at the same level of the canonical one. The English canon is exposed to the process on *Entstellung* as a means of resistance. Bhabha argues that the

subversive character of hybrid readings resulting from this ambivalence leads to a reinterpretation of colonial logic and discourse. There is a discursive reappropriation within “the doubly inscribed space of colonial representation” through resistance (Bhabha 1985:153). Resistance is produced within the rules of recognition of the dominating discourse as they tried to articulate cultural difference to prevent assumptions of collectivity from occurring. Yet, hybridity at work reverses the “effects of the colonialist disavowal and the denied other is included in the official discourse” (Bhabha 1985: 156):

> Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. For the colonial hybrid is the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire, making its objects at once disciplinary and disseminatory or, in my mixed metaphor, a negative transparency. If discriminatory effects enable the authorities to keep an eye on them, their proliferating difference evades that eye, and escapes that surveillance (Bhabha 1985: 154).

Hybrid resistance has the effect of creating a change of perspective. The hybrid subject revaluates his or her presence by resisting it as merely a signifier. Post-colonial authors undergo a process of distortion that challenges the traditional stereotypes of the past, as is visible in the contemporary articulation of colonial discourse. Instead of producing colonialist authority and native repression, hybridisation represents an important change of perspective. It reveals the ambivalence at the source of traditional discourses on authority and enables a form of subversion that prompts intervention on the part of the previously colonised subject. Therefore, culture can be transformed by hybridity as it breaks down the duality between self and other:

> Hybridity has no such perspective of depth or truth to provide: it is not a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures, or the two scenes of the book, in a dialectical play of "recognition." The displacement from symbol to

> sign creates a crisis for any concept of authority based on a system of recognition: colonial specularity, doubly inscribed, does not produce a mirror where the self apprehends itself; it is always the split screen of the self and its doubling, the hybrid (Bhabha 1985: 156).

Hybridity does not represent a problem between two cultures and their identities but instead goes further, proposing a conflict of colonial representation. The colonialist denial of the "signifier" in colonial discourse produces the reverse process; the disavowal of the colonised subjects inevitably inscribes their identities within the official discourse as counter-authorities that provide us with the missing perspectives of the colonial reality. Hybridity becomes crucial to resist and set up another colonial space of power and knowledge. Bhabha adds that as discrimination turns into the acceptance of the hybrid, colonial authority transforms into a mask as it can only produce a partial reality. When race and other identity issues are considered mere masks, postcolonial discourse can question the traditional discourse of authority within the space of colonialism. As a mask, the discourse of power appears to be false, one in which the colonised subject refuses to be the other and produces new perspectives and voices. Hybridity, therefore, resists the idea that there is only one single history, discourse, or idiosyncrasy, and seeks to change it.

The notion of hybridity is embedded in every story in Olive Senior's *Discerner of Hearts*. The stories' cultural and social hybridity, depicted through a variety of characters, allows for new images of postcolonial importance. Senior portrays hybridised characters that change as they relate to each other. Through these interactions, the stories attempt to show societal and historical change and evolution. A multitude of different characters articulate postcolonial discourse in a hybrid society. Bhabha's *Entstellung* can be seen as characters are bound to distort the British perspective of themselves and their country. Characters struggle to identify themselves

within the boundaries of colonialism. In the two short stories analysed in this chapter, readers can find instances of racial and gender identity formation as the development of the characters as subjects subjected to their imperial circumstance and the social traces it has established. Hybridity's resistance is the way natives as "others" struggle to avoid and challenge the white male gaze. Gender and sexuality are also central to the conceptualisation of colonial relations. Loomba (1998: 215) points out that across the colonial spectrum, colonised nations are usually regarded as women. The identification of women as national mothers stems from a wider association of nation with the family. Nation equals home, the leaders assume patriarchal roles, and citizens are brothers and sisters (Loomba 1998: 216). Women have responded to these attempts to limit their social scope. Feminist discourse shares similarities with post-colonial theory, and for this reason the two fields have long been associated with one another, even considered complimentary. Firstly, both discourses are predominantly political and concern themselves with the struggle against oppression and injustice. Moreover, both reject the established hierarchical, patriarchal system, which is dominated by the hegemonic white male, and finally, they both deny the supposed supremacy of masculine power and authority. Imperialism, like patriarchy, is after all a phallocentric ideology that subjugates and dominates its subjects in terms of race and gender. The oppressed woman is, in this sense, akin to the colonized subject. Essentially, exponents of post-colonialism are reacting against colonialism in the political and economic sense while feminist theorists are rejecting colonialism of a sexual nature. Both women and 'natives' are minority groups that are unfairly defined by the intrusive 'male gaze', which is a characteristic of both patriarchy and colonialism.

This circumstance can be seen in Senior's "Window", where the main characters, a white woman and a black man, are made equal in status because both

represent the oppressed minority in Jamaica under the supremacy of white patriarchal standards. They are both reduced to stereotypes. Constructions of the colonial are strongly influenced by the phallocentric prejudice that wrongly defines both natives and women as passive and subsidiary inferiors. In fact, many of the representations of the female native figures in Western Literature and Art perpetuate the myth of the erotically charged female. In recent times, post-colonial studies have reacted to this viewpoint and subsequently involved themselves with the issue of gender, questioning to what extent it affects the lives of colonial subjects who also happen to be female, and investigating whether gender or colonial oppression is the most significant factor in a woman's life. The obvious fact that colonial oppression affects the lives of women, both socially and economically, has forced post-colonial critics to adopt an awareness of gender roles when discussing imperialist exploitation.

Similarly, feminism has become much more aware of its post-colonial counterparts in recent times. In an essay entitled "Rethinking the *Bildungsroman*: the Politics of Rememory and the *Bildgung* of Ethnic American Women Writers", Asian American critic Pin-Chia Feng elaborates on how American writers, especially female writers and more specifically women writers belonging to a certain minority, attempt to look into themselves and write about a "unique trait in American literature: multicultural differences" (Feng 1998: 1). According to Feng, the works of contemporary ethnic women writers about identity formation contribute significantly to the study of the *Bildungsroman,* to American literary history, and to the collective history of the United States of America. In her view, the textual construction of identity embedded in pieces about ethnic women writers delineates the difficulties faced by their protagonists and, consequentially, by their authors in a society permeated by race, class, gender and sex oppression. Feng (1998: 3) stresses the complexity of applying the

conventional definition of *Bildungsroman* to minority subjects, and even more so if they happen to be women. Instead, she coins the term 'anti-bildungsroman' as characteristic of this type of writing, this being a result of black women's inability to keep total control over their bodies and lives and thus becoming casualties, that in their cases, are viewed as failures in relation to acceptable standards. For Feng, the journey to self-discovery embedded in these narratives appears to be virtually unachievable for women of colour. She explains how the stories of black women we habitually come across are characterized by a powerful web of haunting memories that prevent them from ever evolving toward the desirable self-fulfilment. Feng's anti-bildungsroman notion can be seen in some of the characters in the stories by Senior. Feng presupposes that any writing by an ethnic woman about any woman whose main duty is that of personally developing as a member of a community and of a specific society can be considered a bildungsroman. This definition implies that for her, any ethnic woman may try to express her concerns about the difficulties that the women of her race may suffer, in order to identify themselves as both women and members of an ethnic minority community within an oppressive society. As Feng herself recognises, her principle thesis is that of rethinking the genre so as to question how it has been traditionally studied, which has turned a literature of becoming into a wide open criticism of the social product (Feng 1998: 15). For me, her hypothesis which reduces any writing of an ethnic woman to a Bildungsroman seems quite simplistic. The Bildungsroman genre, as it was developed in the eighteenth century, highlights many other facets apart from just self-discovery, which, in my opinion, this study fails to analyse. In "The Glass-Bottom Boat", Eric, as a white male, represents this idea. He has everything society considers necessary to have developed as an individual and he is supposed to represent all the standards imposed by colonial culture. Apparently, he would be the perfect example of

a man who develops himself within the boundaries that his social class, status, race and gender would allow. Yet, he decides to leave all of his comforts because he feels empty in that position. Eric starts the self-discovery process once he decides to challenge convention. In the case of Brid in "Window", the idea of anti-bildungsroman can be clearly traced through the comparison between the two sisters; while Jesse is bound to accept the rules implemented by her background, Brid wants to cross the border to be able to embrace a life with Dev, a black man. Jesse is prepared to use her whiteness to improve her social and economic position, whereas Brid resists accepting the role her mother has laid out for her.

In relation to the importance of considering race and gender oppression as fundamental in order to portray the struggle of black women in texts by black women, Braendlin offers the notion of a "double jeopardy" that is inherent in the self-development process of women in marginal cultures (1998:76). She elucidates how apart from suffering from discrimination and sexism from the dominant culture, they also suffer from prejudice by the members of their own marginal group. This implies a double struggle; against both racial and sex/gender devaluation. As Feng states, black women must dance in the minefield of gender and racial inequality (Feng 1998:16). She cites Amy Ling who declares that black women are prompted to live between worlds, because in a sense they belong to nowhere. Ling uses the USA as an example. According to her, women are debased by the white America and also marginalized as inferior beings by the male members of their own community. This circumstance can be applied to any multicultural society. Deborah McDowell goes even further by positing that black women put up with not only a double jeopardy, but rather multiple ones, in order to illustrate racism, sexism, classism, and any other oppression operating in black women's lives and texts (McDowell 1998:16). In general terms, one can say that

women are multifaceted, as their identities are fragmented into different categories. All these burdens from which minorities suffer prevent them from achieving a definite concept of selfhood. The texts by minority women, in this case black women, usually portray the impracticality of creating a unifying form of human existence, as a result of the multiple social and historical facets at play in their personalities.

Black women characters confront an extra task in accomplishing their final maturity and harmony that is so necessary in defining their experience not only within their minority, but also within the category of sex/gender ideology. Feng points out that the compound of race and gender demarcates the radical discrepancy in black women from the dominant ruling, which renders them handicapped in their story of development (Feng 1998: 16). She underlines that the constant tension between assertiveness and psychological alienation is the foundation for black women's multiple ambivalence of personality. It is precisely this ambivalence that constitutes a chief dilemma that ultimately develops in their writings. There is a contradiction between trying to comprise with the dominant social requirements at the same time they endeavour to identify with their racial roots. Therefore, an element that I regard outstanding to remark is the female black characters as double marginalized. Senior tackles this double marginalization in some of her stories. In "Window", the double jeopardy is represented by Ma Lou, the only servant that the Jaspers keep after Mr. Jasper abandons his wife and daughters. One of the main concerns of female characters in this story is how to deal with race. Skin colour determines their status in society unrelated to their income or occupation. They are stigmatised at the same time by racial and gender issues. They move across the borders between two completely different cultures that blend and clash: the white Jamaica and the Jamaica of the strangers, of the minorities. Brid's mother argues that they were not born poor and that their position in

life should thus be different from that of blacks who were born poor and are supposed to keep themselves like this: “Black people born to be poor” Mama had said. “Nobody expects any better of them” (Senior 1995: 61).

Regarding the racial prejudice indicated in post-colonial narratives, there are several historical factors to take into account. Differently from Europeans, who travelled to America and the Caribbean, Africans who were kidnapped and taken there as labour workers did not consider themselves to be leaving an old world of decadence and death for a new world of hope and possibility. Instead, they were torn apart from their families, traditions and languages to be alienated in American soil. The dream for them laid in the life they were leaving behind. As Barbara Christian puts it (2000), history has been a conundrum for African-Americans in the way they identify themselves as such, in that their blackness had by no means been taken as crucial for their self-creation before they were forcibly brought into the New World. The only aspect of the history they share is the circumstance of the colour of their skin, and from that aspect, they had to create a community. In America they were merely deemed as black, no matter where they came from, and were forced to create a new identity as people with no history, culture or tradition. They were people with no land, no wealth, even when their work was helping to create the new societies in America, no common language apart from the language of the master, no families and no self.

In *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1993), Toni Morrison explores how becoming an Afro-American is enacted with the paradox of being inside and outside the conceived idea of America. Africans taken to America were considered strangers. For Morrison, the Europeans in America, and we can say, those in the British Empire, reduced the diverse identities of many different races, cultures and traditions to one single blackness. Thus, they were alienated from history, identity and

language. The distance between the cultures entailed in these stories is crucial for the progress of their plots. Cultural otherness is highlighted in all those whose origins are not European, but especially in women as they need to deal with both racial and gender issues, as carrying a double yoke. The inability to create a life outside the constraints of race and gender exclusion create a feeling of loss and alienation that impedes them from evolving personally and collectively. By trying to escape from these situations, which prevent them from developing as self-assertive individuals, main characters reject and subvert the plot arranged for them by colonialism.

As a white and previously a wealthy woman with land, Brid's mother believes she is on top of society from birth, while any black is not supposed to reach a better status. Race seems to be a crucial factor for one's development in life. As an important part in one's identity, being white or black marks their fate. It is as if free will does not exist when your story is already written from birth. Jesse agrees with this idea and acts accordingly.

> "We weren't born poor "Jesse said. "We're only poor because Papa ran away and left us and there was nobody to look after the place. Mama got sick and everything." (Senior 1995: 61).

Jesse uses her position and the colour of her skin so as to exit poverty and isolation. Her light skin is her so-called passport to a better life. This is the reason why she completely leaves her past behind, almost even seems to have forgotten it, for the sake of a more comfortable life and position. She believes that her father's running away has put them in their current situation, but that order and logic have to be restored, and that once she finds a proper husband she will once again occupy her proper place. Neither Jesse nor her mother will ever accept their situation because of their strong pride, even as colonial authority prevails.

Brid complains that she has been hearing this all her life. For her it is time to accept their lot in life and stop behaving as if they were better than the rest. She believes that this pretending has no advantages at all. Her being different and her acting as such is the main cause of her classmates laughing at her all the time and putting her hair in the desk inkwell to make fun of her. She thinks that having fair skin while being surrounded by her black classmates estranges her and her family from the community. She does not want to be alienated but is forced to by her race and position. The Jaspers live on the frontier between two cultures; they are not black, but they are also not wealthy enough to be accepted by white people. Brid does not want to be noticed because this would disclose the truth about her family, and prove that they have been faking their identity. She does not want to be seen, she does not want her classmates to notice "her poverty, her house falling down, her bedridden mother." (Senior 1995: 61) Everyone around her lives the same but they are black and according to her mother that is what is expected of them.

Even though, Ma Lou represents the "double jeopardy" in Senior's story, she seems to agree with the idea that blacks and whites are different and that a black cannot aspire to be like a white. She understands her role in society the same way Brid's mother does. When Dev tells her that he is thinking of marrying Brid, she reacts as if he were crazy:

> "Dev, you know oil and water don't mix from morning. You go away is true and do well for yourself… But that still don't give you no right to think you can marry white people daughter. Don't even think of it. You want kill off Miss Carmen?" (Senior 1995: 67).

Ma Lou accepts her role in a society plagued by racism and gender norms and she does not even consider the possibility of crossing any borders. Dev and Brid's relationship would not be accepted by neither whites nor blacks. Colonialism has conformed a

society in which roles are clear and races are not supposed to mix. Yet, both were born in a hybrid society and they have both decided to challenge this custom. Brid's family situation put her closer to the black part of society, and Dev's economic improvement situates him closer to the white. Both remain at the boundary between the two worlds cemented by colonialism. At that border is precisely where hybridity can challenge the traditional roles that prevailed during the empire's rule.

Both "The Glass-Bottom Boat" and "Window" are set somewhere in Jamaica like every story in *Discerner of Hearts*. The author recreates rural and urban settings looking back several decades on the history of her country. Yet, really, both could have taken place at any former colony, as they deal with universal conflicts concerning race and gender. Infused with the pathos occasioned by life's inevitable wills, the stories talk about the bittersweet discoveries the characters have to make in a society caught between tradition and change. The story juxtaposes these two significant aspects; place and human feelings, as marked by the choice of an accepting of one's fate or of the consecution of free will. Other important elements of the story I point out are the author's efforts to present a fine characterization and her recreation of everyday speech.

In "Window", the narrator opens the story by telling us that the eldest daughter of a white family had left for Kingston four months before to live with some well-off relatives. At the same time, the narrator tells us how their black servant's grandson has come back from Colon after several years where he worked building the Panama Canal just before World War I. These two parallel events mark the development of the story as well as the different expectations in life of the characters, and especially the two Jasper sisters: Jesse and Brid. On one hand, Jesse, the elder sister, has gone to Kingston (the only urban area in Jamaica at the time) in order to marry well. She uses the prestige of the family, their whiteness, in order to find a suitable and wealthy husband. On the other

hand, Brid remains at the family home waiting for life to give her an opportunity. Her sister told her she would send for her, yet, she does not even write a letter:

> When Jesse went off to Kingston she promised to write, but it was three months now since they'd heard from her. In her first letter Jesse had told of the grand reception she'd had from Aunt Irene and Uncle Cyrus and her cousins, about her new wardrobe, her new life. But the letters then ceased. Mama had since heard from Aunt Irene, heard Jesse was getting on and had fitted into the family, that they expected great things of her. But Jesse didn't write again (Senior 1995: 63-64).

Jesse writes at first but at one point she probably decides to embrace her new life and leave her past behind. The new clothes, the new family and the new life have transformed her into a different person. Now, she has status, and she can use it in order to attract a good husband. Jesse knows that her real life and her real family are not enough in order to reach this goal. The only way out for a girl like her, who cannot live by her own means and maintain the status she is supposed to have, is to marry well. She is poor, but she can pretend she is someone else in front of the rest of the bourgeoisie in Kingston. In her town, Jesse does not have the possibility of meeting anybody worth marrying;

> When Jesse was twenty, she and Mama and Ma Lou realized that nobody would ever come along to notice her where they lived, since nobody ever came at all, so she was sent to Aunt Irene in Kingston (Senior 1995: 62).

In this case, the setting of the story matters. A girl like Jesse cannot have the same opportunities in the rural area in which she lives in comparison to Kingston. This is why her mother sends her to the capital: the only urban area in Jamaica. The differences between the big city and the countryside are great. Rural areas are a world apart and isolation plays an important role in this. Jamaica itself has a decisive setting: it is completely cut off and far away from the other islands in the Caribbean.

The Jaspers' situation is difficult. The girls' mother is an invalid who suffers from a permanent illness. Ma Lou is the only black servant they keep from the old splendid days. She is the one in charge of the house, the grounds, and Mrs. Jasper and her daughters. The four women live all alone since Mr. Jasper ran away, leaving them poor and isolated. The house is derelict and the land not as fertile as it used to be. When Jesse moves to Kingston, Brid feels even more isolated than before; her mother is always in bed, and Ma Lou spends the whole day busy with her tasks:

> Brid liked it when Jesse was around because then nobody made any demands on her. Jesse was the one who helped Mama in the sick-room, who went and spent her time talking and reading to her. Brid hated going into the room, hated the smell, the way her mother looked, her querulous complaints. She never went in if she could help it. Now that she had finished elementary school, with no money to send her further, she preferred to spend her time helping Ma Lou in the garden or the kitchen, places where Jesse hated to be…now Brid cried herself to sleep because there was no one to laugh with (Senior 1995: 62).

If she was isolated before, now Brid feels as if she were living in her own island. She is not in contact with anybody except her mother and Ma Lou. Yet, they cannot pay any attention to her; her mother never abandons her room due to her illness and Ma Lou has no spare time because of her work. In addition, she hates seeing her mother like bedridden, and spends hours inside the house taking care of her. The three women are isolated and tied up by their situation. Brid cannot even study further as the rest of white girls do because they cannot afford it. Her life has been reduced to the private sphere of the house, which would be very similar to that of the girls' surrounding her, except that because of her whiteness she cannot take up a job.

When Dev comes back, Brid discovers new feelings. Someone new appears in her life. Without letting him notice her, Brid watches every move he makes. The Jasper sisters and Dev had grown up together in the backyard of the house. When he was sixteen, he went away to make a living, and they had not heard from him again until the

moment described in the story. One day when Brid is helping Ma Lou with the crops, Dev sees her. Without uttering a word, Brid runs away, too shy to open herself up to an outsider:

> Dev never saw Brid until he had been back for a few weeks: he had been so busy walking up and down showing off, and when he came back to the cottage at night, they would all have gone to bed. It was only after he decided that he had been seen by everyone he had wanted to see him, and had put his good clothes away and stopped walking about, that he saw Brid in the garden one day. She was in the garden helping Ma Lou stake some tomatoes, with her thick black hair in one long plait down her back and her skirt pulled up at the waist to show her bare legs, just like Ma Lou (Senior 1995: 64).

At their first encounter, Dev realises that the Brid he remembers as a child has transformed into a woman. Before even noticing that she was still there, he had already met everyone in the area to show them how he has become a well-off man. Brid sees him first but she does so in secret. She cannot recognise this man as the boy she grew up with and so she is fascinated. From this first encounter, a mutual love begins to grow.

They grew up together but the man in front of her is an outsider, someone very different from the boy she spent her days with as a child. This brief encounter changes the development of the story and gives way to many different issues concerning matters of race, sex, gender, social constrains and tradition. From this point onwards the love story between them starts to consolidate. Yet, it is significant to remark that they never speak or have any kind of physical contact. They love each other only in the sense of appreciating each other's presence. Every night, Dev sits in front of Brid's window trying to get close to her. Brid knows he is there and observes him through the shutters until she falls asleep, safe enough knowing that Dev is outside protecting her:

> He couldn't sleep and took to walking outside at night, to look at the stars, to feel the cool air, and for a long time wasn't even conscious that he always ended up standing in the darkness of the cocoa walk staring at the shutters of Bridget's room. Brid saw him, though, for she hardly slept either, and one night she had

> seen his shadow move in the cocoa walk, saw him standing there looking at her window (Senior 1995: 66).

This situation creates a flowing of ideas on the minds of both characters, who dream of each other and get confusing feelings about each other's thoughts and feelings. Dev does not know that Brid is also pining after him, and she does not know why he is always there. This would seem to be a beautiful fairy tale in which at some point the two would finally encounter one another and live happily ever after. But, could this be possible? Would their community accept a love like theirs? Would they consider it pure, decent and appropriate? At the time the story occurs, at the very beginning of the twentieth century, before World War I, the relationship between Brid and Dev was something unthinkable. They both know it and for this reason keep at a distance from each other. The civil rights movement had not even started yet and racial differences were legally backed. This is why Dev is legally paid less by the American than a white would be for the same work during his time at the Canal:

> You did the same as the Negroes from the states did. But the islanders knew that those men didn't know any better, it came as natural to them as eating and sleeping to behave in this subservient manner, and they viewed them with scorn. They didn't have a home to go back to where the climate was natural, instead of this endless rain, and where you were a subject of the King of England. A British subject. Good as any man. Equal to any man before the law. British law. (Senior 1995: 69).

Although the salary is established by means of race, the blacks from Jamaica think that at least they have a home. They believe that British law protects them from inequality and prejudice. Yet, the reality of their existences shows them that these inequalities still exist and are highly evident in their society. Then, the love between Brid and Dev would not be illegal but rather inadequate. The standards imposed by society would not admit any relationship between them. They are paid less for being black and they are considered to be inferior by those whites who share their British citizenship. Even though all the black workers in the Canal Zone are paid silver, Senior ironically points

out that for the Americans the work and the treatment comes “as natural as eating and sleeping in this subservient manner”, whereas the islanders know that in their country they are subjects of the King of England and British subjects are equal to any man before the law. Dev uses his work to improve his social position. He succeeds in being admired by blacks but he would never be accepted by whites. He is wealthy enough to live better than other black people but he has no access to the commodities white people enjoy. Just as it would be unacceptable for Brid to find a job, it would be quite inconvenient for Dev to move to live among white people with a similar income.

Although he knows this relationship may have consequences, Dev decides to act. He decides to perform a more active role in the story. Yet, he does not know that Brid has also made up her mind about the situation but has a heavy weight on her shoulders; it is not only the social pressure but that of her own family as well. She knows what her family thinks about blacks and their role in society. Brid cannot understand why her mother and Jesse are so proud of being white when she cannot see any advantages to it at all:

> Brid couldn´t understand how Mama and Jesse could be so proud of their white skin when so far as she could see there were no advantages to be derived from it (Senior 1995: 60).

They are white but Brid cannot study further on because they are poor. Their house is derelict because they do not have money to mend it and her mother would never wake up from her bed again. Their father left them and they are isolated and neglected by their neighbours, but they are white. They represent the Empire and consider themselves superior to any black person; even though they are also British, as the salary they receive at the Canal constantly reminds them.

Brid hates the idea of her mother being ill. For her, the situation they live in since her father left is a shame. This fact is the first point on which the two sisters greatly diverge. For Jesse, siding with her mother, the mere idea of being white is a source of pride and cause for dignity. On the contrary, Brid thinks that this very pride is a source of shame. She cannot see the difference between her black classmates and herself. All are poor and isolated. Yet, she is even more isolated than the rest because she lives in a world to which she does not belong. The story takes place at a time when poverty and blackness were intimately linked and accepted, just as wealth and whiteness were also commonplace. Blacks were not considered to be equal, and therefore they would never improve their social position or make a living out of it as whites do. But, what is her role in life if she does not follow this pattern? Is race a source of pride? Or, is money what gives one high status?

The same issues are important to consider when trying to understand the situation of Eric in "The Glass-Bottom Boat". It is a story about being who one is expected to be, or about developing your free will and forming your identity without taking social constraints into account. It tries to solve several questions related to identity development and accepting the life one is supposed to live. Are our lives arranged since birth? Do we have any chance of getting away from that path? This story deals with passively accepting the script that history and society have arranged for us, or becoming an active being who defies these restrictions and freely escapes them in order to reach full happiness.

This is a story about the life of Eric Johns Jr. It begins the same way it ends; its development is circular. At the beginning he is at home looking at a woman while she is preparing herself to go out. While he looks at her, he begins to remember his past and how he came to know her. The story is divided into sections in which readers discover

different instances in Eric's life. He grew up in a wealthy family, studied in one of the best schools in Jamaica and prepared himself to work in the company founded by his own father and a man named Mr. Dunn. He saw how Dunn's sons and even grandsons moved up while he remained a lowly clerk where he began. Yet, he never had the nerve to ask why he was never chosen for a promotion. He was born in a nice house, in a nice area and had his future mapped out for him working for Manston Dunn. Since he was a child great expectations were upon him. He married well. His wife Elise devoted her life to making their home a quiet and comfortable place as well as raising their three children, while also working on her own. Elise was attractive and came from the same sort of background as he. She appeared to be the perfect wife for a handsome rising young executive. But, Eric began to feel invisible, at work and at home. He felt his duties as a man, as a husband and as a father were not being fulfilled.

The only person who seems to pay attention to him or even notice he is there is his secretary, Miss Pearson. She is a plain woman with no taste for clothes, but well-mannered and kind to him. Eric started to take her home after work, and one day they had sex in his car. They secretly kept a physical relationship and met up every now and then. One day Sybil Pearson disappeared from work. Eric found her and she told him that she was pregnant. These circumstances served as the impetus for Eric to move forward; he decided to leave his wife and children and embrace this new love. Unfortunately, it appeared to be quite inconvenient for both of them. Elise insisted on keeping all of his money, and because everybody at the firm knew of the affair, Eric was let go. He and Sybil had to move to a small house and in the end she lost her baby. They remained together but life was not as he had expected it to be.

As in "Window", in this story we also find an invisible barrier that prevents the main character from developing. The protagonist of this story feels that he only sees life

through a glass. In literature, both mirrors and windows have traditionally represented gates to the inner self, as well as paths to new experiences and to change in artistic representations. They are means of looking at oneself from a different perspective, of looking at different realities from a secure position. In Eric's case, he feels he can only look at his own existence as a reflection of what it should be. Even worse, he contemplates his own life as fragmented and fractured as the glass distorts everything; all the events and circumstances he experiences, even he himself feels broken. Eric remains an outsider in his own life because it is as if his life had been arranged since he was born; his school, his job, his wife. Everything seems to have been chosen for him, without him ever having the opportunity to decide what he wants. Eric has no expectations in life. He appears to know everything before it occurs because he always does as he should. He has not got the feeling that he has to fight to get anything. His life is typical of those of his kind, in regards to class and social status. He remains passive as his life unfolds before him. He has not even got the courage to ask why he was the only one in the company who was never promoted:

> He never had the nerve to question any of this- why he was not chosen to head up this or that- thinking that if he were patient and worked hard, his time would come. Of late though, he got the feeling that he had from the start been working his way into a dead end. What had happened? How had he got that way? He wasn't sure. Sometimes he reflected that maybe it was the burden of being the second generation of the new middle class…By the time he came along, what was there to struggle for? (Senior 1995: 111-112).

He has situated himself into passiveness. He feels whatever he does will not be given any importance. His father and the other owners of the company have already chosen a position for him. He is working there because of his father and social position but he is not going to be given the chance to improve his situation or the possibility to decide what to do.

As a child, Eric looked through the glass in the boat and imagined there was a different life down there: a magical life full of expectations to be fulfilled. Yet, as his real life develops, all the magic and expectations fade away. The fragmented view of self he had as a child could never be completed because his destiny was already assigned to him. At the time in which the story takes place, Eric feels alienated because he is unable to freely develop his will and create his own identity. He has never decided anything by himself and this creates a feeling of unease he is not capable of overcoming. His society is one in which race, class and power, determine relationships. Here, the glass reflection not only indicates the protagonist's dependence upon his sense of inexperience, but also his deficient sense of himself as subject.

Brid's bedroom window is the most important symbol in the story. It is crucial for several reasons; first, the window and its shutters help Brid carry out her peeping and eavesdropping and allow her to control the situation without being seen. The window prevents her from being in direct contact with reality and with her feelings; she can perform her role easily that way. The glass of the window helps her see reality in a different way from that of her mother and sister, not so transparent and clear. It gives us the idea that what one sees sometimes has to be questioned. There is a dichotomy between what she sees and what she knows that puts great pressure on her. She looks at Dev but she does not know if he sees her the same way that she sees him. Dev knows she is inside the house but he does not know whether or not she is looking at him.

Secondly, the bedroom window is significant because it is the object that separates the two worlds she lives in: her house and the world of her family; and then the world outside and Dev. In other words, it separates tradition and change. Inside the house the established pattern is a traditional one, whereas outside there is change in the form of Dev. Brid has to choose whether she wants to open the window and embrace a

love that would be a social transgression, or maintain it closed and accept the plot already arranged for her by tradition and society. It marks the differences between her dreams and expectations, and the dreams and expectations imposed on her by others. Even though she has the impulse to open the window, she is not capable of physically doing it. Letting Dev get inside the house, inside her life, is not as easy as just opening a window. Brid knows it implies a lot more. For her, to get out may also have great consequences. She may lose track by deviating from the designated path which may lead her to an uncertain position; the boundary between the two races, a boundary which cannot be crossed.

Although Eric has got everything he is supposed to have in life; a nice house in a niece neighbourhood, a devoted wife, good children, a car and a stable job, Eric sometimes feels invisible and alienated:

> Sometimes, now, he had this desire to test himself, to see whether he really existed for anyone, and he would change his routine for a while… Going home, he'd find nobody there to remark on his lateness (Senior 1995: 119).

In his study of personality construction, the psychologist, Laing, (1961: 65) stated that subjectivity was only created once there was recognition on the part of the community one lived in. He called this "complementary identity". Considering this concept, one can conclude that without another's recognition of oneself as an individual within a certain group, the process of subject formation can never be completed. Eric feels that although he seems to be in the right place, nobody notices his presence. He does not receive affirmation from others, neither at work or at home. He thinks that because of this, he must be of no great significance:

> Going home at night to an empty house with his dinner in the oven, he began to get the feeling that his life, his very existence, was so insubstantial that it hardly mattered to anyone. Perhaps it had to his mother, but she had died a long time ago (Senior 1995: 118).

Eric realises that nothing in his life fulfils his initial expectations. He embraces the figure of his dead mother as the only person who could understand the way he feels. This is a sign of the process of self-creation that he is still seeking.

Senior's story can be interpreted as the progression of a subject-in-process. Her central character, Eric, is definitely a man who tries to identify his role in the events he is living. In the past, he had always assumed that he was advancing in the direction of prosperity, influence and higher status, but little by little his expectations are not met, which causes him to redefine his circumstances and add a new step into his self-fulfilment. First, he found joy in going to the bar, and later in his relationship with Sybil Pearson. When he decides to leave everything for her, his motivation is not just to have a fling, but rather his desire to maturely initiate himself into exercising his free will. At the time this happens, Eric feels utterly certain of himself and his decision. This is an indicator of the process of foundation of subjectivity he is going through. His naïve expectations of life and stability are eventually contrasted with the security he acquires when he commences his relationship with Sybil. He finally crosses the boundary into self- fulfilment.

Senior explores the main elements of a society caught between tradition and change. If whites are rich and blacks are poor, where do the Jaspers find themselves? Does money take precedence over race, or vice versa? Brid and Dev have got a different position; Brid is white and poor while Dev is black and has money. Do these circumstances mean that they are equal? In this story there is a transposition of roles that defy the traditional pattern of race and status organisation in Jamaica. Hybridity as disavowal, in Bhabha's terms, is reflected in the characters' views of Jamaican society. Brid and Dev's relationship inaugurates a change in the rural Jamaican setting of the story. They attempt to upset cultural roles, yet, the burden of tradition is still very

strong. This fact makes the lovers' story a secret one. Brid never talks about her feelings to anybody. She feels isolated. She cannot count on her mother and her sister, who would blame her for not being proud enough, but she does not belong to the black community either, and knows for sure that not even Ma Lou would understand her feelings. She does not feel superior for being white, but blacks reject her for it. She lives on the border between two worlds that co-exist but usually do not interact beyond necessity. In a way, Dev also finds himself on this border. When he comes back from Colon, he is self-assured, good looking, and has made some money for himself. He breaks the pattern society imposes on those of his race, always expected to remain behind whites and without exceeding them in monetary achievements. Society takes for granted that blacks have no pride, which is why in the Canal Zone where Dev worked, blacks were paid in silver while whites were paid in gold. Dev accepted the idea that until he had saved enough he was "silver", "as the races were categorized" (Senior 1995: 69).

Both stories, "Glass-Bottom Boat" and "Window", explore the characters' expectations in life, especially those of the young ones. This issue prompts readers to wonder if life is either marked by fate and definitive social boundaries, or if one can control it freely. Through the different views of the future and of life in general, a clear comparison between the two sisters can be established. When Jesse leaves for Kingston, Brid feels a little overwhelmed by the situation. She likes her sister around because then nobody makes any demands of her. Jesse is the one who helps their mother in the sick room and spends her time talking and reading to her. Brid hates going into her mother's room and prefers to spend her time helping Ma Lou in the kitchen or the garden, places where Jesse hates to be. By contrasting the position of the youngest characters to that of their parents, Senior is focusing on the changes the country is experiencing just before

independence. These characters show how as Bhabha and Brathwaite suggest hybridity works both ways. Senior highlights how new identities emerge from the mixture of races and all characters are influenced by this mutual contact.

Dev cannot understand what is wrong with him. He has money enough to rebuild the house, provide good shelter and take care of the three women. He is also in love with Brid. He cannot understand why his grandmother and Miss Carmen are so worried about Brid's future and that now that he proposes to marry her, his grandmother is so upset. With this event, readers can be aware of a generational conflict. Dev and Brid do not see their love as insane, but they behave sometimes as if it was something forbidden. They do not behave as usual lovers do; they do not talk to each other or have any kind of physical contact even though they are willing to. The weight of tradition is crushing. Senior points out how several decades back in the history of her country racial mixing was seen as something unthinkable.

Racial difference is also marked by the use of language. Blacks and whites speak very differently. While working class and rural people speak what they call a dialect in Jamaica, educated and urbanised people speak Standard English. The use of language determines someone's position. It is as if they cannot understand each other because they are not capable of even speaking the same language. Brid and Dev are not supposed to understand each other; even more, they never know about the other's feelings. They only know where the other is, but Dev does not know she is looking, and Brid is not sure why he stays under the tree in front of her window for hours. The fact that they never talk to each other in the story creates great confusion for the characters. Brid knows that he stands in front of her window for hours at night, but Dev never notices her peeping through the shutters. Brid never knows Dev loves her. She also does

not know about his plans to marry her, and then take care of her family, the house, and the property.

All Jesse expects in life is for a man to come along. She looks for a wealthy white husband to marry, following the family pattern. She uses her whiteness to hide her poverty and find a suitable husband. Jesse wants to maintain the social pattern established for those of her race: and in order to do so she has to marry a rich man. Her mother wants her daughter to marry well, as it is the only way out of their situation. When Miss Carmen realizes that no man would ever show up where they live, she sends Jesse to Kingston to live with some well-off relatives. Jesse moves to fulfil her one and only dream of marrying well. Once she is in Kingston, she never writes home, as if she has forgotten about her family and her old life. Is she also ashamed of her situation, of her poverty? In the end, both sisters are ashamed because their family pretends to be what they are not, and are embarrassed for how they turn out.

Jesse uses her whiteness as a tool to improve her social position. For her, to be white means to be blessed by God and it can be used as means for attaining what she sees as a better future:

> "God gave you beautiful skin and long lovely hair and you should thank him for it and take care of it. Someday a man will come along who will appreciate those things and you'll be glad then that you don't have ol' nayga skin and picky-picky hair" (Senior 1995: 61).

Jesse does not have any doubts about her role in life. She clearly follows the path society and history has arranged for her. She chooses to keep antiquated tradition alive. On the contrary, Brid is not so certain about her role within the society of her time. The most important thing about Brid is the fact that she cannot accept her false position so easily. But as pointed out before, what are her possibilities in life if she does not accept the role imposed on her by society? Does she really want to change everything?

It is difficult to answer these questions. Brid does not even think about it like Dev does. To find a husband is apparently the only possibility for change for women in the story. Yet, Dev is not a suitable candidate. This seems to be important for the rest of the characters but not for these two lovers. Dev would rather go away again if he cannot be with her and Brid is desperate thinking he might leave without her knowing why. Yet, neither has she opened the window nor has he entered her room or tried to get close to her. Is the burden of society so heavy? They even feel guilty just for feeling what they feel. The girl escapes his sight every time he is around and she only looks at him secretly. Seeing in the story may be confusing. Seeing does not imply knowing, but certainly forces their imaginations to work. Readers know what both see and the way they act; yet characters only know what they perceive. They never look at each other directly. Then, are their doubts about the other's feelings stopping them from acting openly? Maybe it is not only the prejudices they have about each other and their position in society but also their insecurities towards the other's feelings that stop them.

The relationship between Eric and his father is another tense subplot in the text. He feels the burden of the father figure over him. His father is a self-made man. He started with nothing and later he built his own empire. Eric has been sent to the best schools so that he could follow in his father's footsteps. Yet, Eric resembles his mother more than his father:

> Eric, it turned out, was good at nothing except singing and music - talents he got from his mother. In fact, he was like his mother, soft, not very demanding. Unlike his father, who, for all his affability, shouted and tyrannized to get his way (either at home or office), who has an unspeakably cruel tongue which he used like a whip at times (on his employees, on his wife or his son), who drove everyone as hard as he drove himself (Senior 1995: 113).

Eric Johns Sr. put all his efforts into his only son and his future success. He has spent great amounts of money on his education and has tried to model him as his successor.

Yet, from childhood Eric shows no alignment with his father's way of thinking or principles whatsoever. This fact makes his father reject him because he cannot see himself on his son. Eric feels he could never be a tyrant like his father, someone everyone fears and respects, and tends towards his mother's softness. He is not a man of action like his father. He does not demand anything special in life, probably because everything has being given to him since birth. Eric has never been encouraged to choose the kind of life he wanted to live. Thus, in order to be different from his father, he is transformed into being the cause of his entire father's violent behaviour:

> Whereas, before, Eric had been the sole target of a cruel inquisition whenever his father was home, the object of slighting remarks and offhand lectures, now he was not even expected to venture a remark. If at the dinner table he spoke at all, his father would ignore him, sometimes rudely interrupt him (Senior 1995: 113).

Since he was a little boy, Eric has had too much demanded of him. He believes that it is his father's fault that he is not moving up in the firm. Yet he feels relieved that his father's attitude has changed from cruel prosecution to simple indifference. While Eric openly embraces the principles represented by his mother, he directly rejects those embedded in the figure of his father. Psychologically, it is as if Eric remains linked to his mother and the Semiotic order she represents. He has not yet been able to embrace "the Law of the Father" and the Symbolic order it represents. Yet, from the Semiotic he can neither articulate a proper discourse nor complete his identity.

Lacan's theory of the *"Mirror Stage"*[2] (Moi 1985: 99) supplies us with a bond between the creation of subjectivity and mirror's imagery from a psychoanalytic

[2] Lacan, in his theory of the Mirror Stage, states that there is a pre-oedipal stage in which the child is unable to perceive itself as a separated being from the mother's body. This is the stage of the Semiotic where there is no sense of subjectivity and it is associated with the mother. The Oedipal crisis occurs when the child is forced to enter into the symbolic order, a stage linked to the acquisition of language and therefore of the ability of naming itself as an independent being. The crisis happens when the father splits

viewpoint. Applying it to this specific story, Eric's mother's death would symbolise the Oedipal crisis that occurs when the child trespasses the frontier from the Semiotic into the Symbolic. As Eric himself thinks, his mother was the only person who knew he was there. For her he was not invisible. Eric has departed away from the Semiotic order of the mother in the pre-liminal condition and thus all the values his mother represented, and has introduced himself into the Symbolic order, or The Law of the Father, this way accepting the phallus as ruler as the only possibility of survival in human society. The moment he begins working in his father's company, Eric is embracing all the values his father represents. Yet, he feels lost in this world. His father and his world have metaphorically broken the union between mother and son, forcing Eric's access into the phallic world of the Symbolic: he models himself after his father. Once he is in the Symbolic, he begins to form his identity. Lacan (Moi 1985: 99) evaluates the separation from the mother as a crucial step towards subjectivity. Then, why would Eric feel isolated, invisible and lost?

In the case of Brid, she never had a male figure to look at and she feels unable to identify herself with her traditional mother. Ma Lou is her only referent. Her relationship with her maid blurs the distance between the races proving Bhabha's notion of hybridity to be true. Brid sees Dev as an equal. Brid cannot see reality in the way her mother and sister do. Her model figure is Ma Lou, who was born on Brid's family's property because her parents worked there. When Miss Carmen was born, Ma Lou took care of her, and then she looked after Jesse and Brid years later. She has been with them

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up the dyadic unity, which exists between the mother and the child and forbids the child further access the mother's body. The phallus of the father represents the Law of the Father, and once the child enters into the Symbolic should accept the phallus as signifier and the Law of the Father as the only way of living in human society. Lacan states that the crossing between the semiotic order of the mother into the symbolic order of the father, happens in what he denominates the mirror stage .The mirror function is to endow the child with a unitary body image separated from the mother's body and therefore let him develop individually as a subject (Moi 1985:99).

her whole life. Brid thinks that she belongs to them as much as they belong to her. At the time of the story, Ma Lou makes all the decisions for the household and assumes the role of the head of the family after Miss Carmen falls ill. Then, why is she any different from them?

Hybridity and its representation can also be analysed considering the narrative voice as a postcolonial reaction to the western patriarchal establishment that prevailed in Jamaica during colonial times. These stories rebel against the idea of the British book as they articulate the voices of an array of characters that were traditionally discriminated from the official discourse. Voices are contrasted at a narrative scope. “Window”, as a short story, apparently follows the typical tale structure. It is told by an omniscient narrator who little by little appears to be talking through the voice of the main characters: Brid and Dev. The other characters’ views are also reported by these two characters. The two views are intertwined with the narrator’s, always in third person singular. Brid’s monologues are a mixture of her thoughts and feelings and the things she sees without being noticed through shutters and cracks in the walls. The reader has the impression that the scene is narrower, only perceiving what Brid sees. There is a mixture of what she actually sees and what she imagines. Brid can only see Dev from behind the shutters. She merely knows what she sees through the shutters; the rest is pure imagination. An adolescent, she is experiencing sexual emotion and love for the first time. This makes her feel shy and distant because she cannot even cope with these new feelings. Behind the shutters she feels safe enough to look without herself being seen. The shutters help her preserve her feelings from the rest of the world.

The narrator does not describe the image in detail to oblige readers to get the perspective the characters get. The scene is visual rather than verbal for the characters. Yet, readers are not given the whole picture of the scene. The narrator is the one who

transforms the scene into words, but always from the perspective of the characters; like on a film screen when the camera focuses on one character's view to frame the scene from this one perspective. There is a transposition of images into written language. The narrator seems to be adapting the images as they are seen into a narrative sequence.

The same happens with Dev's parts. One only gets his perspective of events. Having said this, can one say that the narrator is a reliable one? Are they objective and do they see each scene clearly as an outsider? One can say that this way of narrating events creates interplay between the narrator, the text itself, and the reader. The reader seems to know everything the narrator is saying. Yet when the narrator gets into the characters' minds, one only gets their view of the story, their fears, insecurities and thoughts. This forces readers out of the role of being spectators into active builders of the story. The reader has to arrange the order in which the events occurred, organise the whole scene, and determine the role each character plays so as to wholly understand the story.

This interplay creates a sense of confusion both for the characters and for the reader. The narrator is choosing what to give and when to give it at every point. Even so, readers have a privileged position with respect to characters. The author recreating real life situations introduces readers to the minds of characters and shows us their doubts and fears. In real life it is very difficult to know what others are thinking and this is what the author recreates for us. This makes characters more human and relatable. The way the text is presented through the views of the two characters creates great narrative tension. We know what they are thinking when even they themselves do not. What the narrator does is create certain expectations only to then break them as she pleases. For example, at one point, readers may think that Brid is going to open the window, but then she does not do so:

> The minute she'd seen him she had wanted to throw open her shutters to let him know she was there. But, though her hand reached countless times for the latch, she couldn't bring herself to open it. Then he was gone and she climbed into her bed no longer feeling consoled by his presence but overwhelmed by her cowardice (Senior 1995: 73).

The absolute authority of an omniscient narrator generates an outcome in which the reader appears to become a passive receiver. In "Window", the shifting process occurs. Even though there seems to be an omniscient narrator controlling the flow of actions in the story, there are parts that are told from the perspective of one of the characters. The narrator knows everything and apparently remains as an outsider. Yet, this whole process constitutes further manipulation of the reader. The reader appears to know more than the characters. Apparently, the narrator manages to control every thought, word and action of the characters so as to involve the reader in the story, as if confiding in the reader. But, up to what point are readers controlled, too? The narrative follows a pattern, which may seem to involve readers fully as builders of the story; yet, information is only given as the narrator chooses. Therefore, the reader must fill in all those gaps in the story that are left uncompleted, and never at their free will, but rather at the whim of the narrator. This strategy transforms the narrative into something more open to interpretation.

The ending remains unclear. We do not know if Brid finally opens the window or if she is just dreaming of doing it. Everything depends on whether one believes change is possible or not. Is it possible to overcome such well-established rules and social confines? Does society allow us to choose our own path, or is it already established from birth, as Jesse believes? The most important question is if Dev and Brid really believe they can be together. Maybe Brid is not opening the window because she feels extremely tied to the standards in her society. Maybe she does not have the courage to defy the rules imposed on her by society and with which her mother and Ma

Lou seem to totally agree. It is possible that even though the reader is told that Dev confides in his grandmother about wanting to marry Brid, he does not really do it because he feels it is mad to even think about such a thing. In the end, they never get close to each other, they never touch; so maybe this is all they can give one another because otherwise the consequences would be insurmountably difficult.

"The Glass-Bottom Boat" can be read as a story about being what you are expected to be, or developing your free will and conforming your identity without taking social norms into account. It tries to solve several questions related to identity development and accepting the life we are supposed to live. Are our lives arranged since birth? Do we have any chance of getting away from that path? This story deals with passively accepting the script that history and society have arranged for us, or choosing to become an active being who defies these parameters and freely escapes them in order to reach full happiness.

> He sometimes felt that he was looking at everything as through the "glass-bottom boats" he used to ride in as a child when his father took them to Montego Bay. Ordinary in all other ways, these boats had a square of thick glass let into the bottom through which he could see, in a wavering and fractured light, another, stranger, more magical life below (Senior 1995: 119).

In a sense, Senior is challenging those psychoanalytical theories that favour the separation from the mother in order to independently create one's subjectivity. Eric returns the principles his mother embodies, which are in turn represented in Sybil Pearson. Eric looks back on his mother to model himself as a new man. He wants to marry Sybil after having an affair with her. Sybil is not the stereotypical woman a man like him would be expected to choose. She is not attractive or classy; Sybil stands as the opposite to Eric's wife. They do not even belong to the same world. Sybil does not represent someone imposed by his father's social organisation and by being with her, Eric is rejecting his father's way of life. He is leaving the path and deciding for himself.

By being together, both Eric and Sybil challenge societal norms imposed by patriarchy. In a society marked by class, it is difficult to deviate as they have. This is the reason why their relationship does not work out as well as they had expected. Both end up rejected by their peers and eventually become isolated.

Although told by a third person narrator, this story focuses on the viewpoint of the main male character:

> He sat in his chair in the little living room from which he could not look directly at her in the bedroom and, watching her, he wondered at all her busyness nowadays with pots and jars and lotions when so little result was obtained. What upset him the most was that her hair combing ritual had come to an end, and what was she without her hair? (Senior 1995: 106).

The main character in this story feels he sees life through a mirror. He can only look at his own existence as a reflection of what it should be. Still more, he contemplates his own life as being fragmented and fractured. The glass distorts everything; all the events and circumstances he experiences and also his view of himself.

Readers encounter themselves both inside and outside the main character's mind. It seems that the whole story is a game played between the author herself and the omniscient narrator who sometimes appears in the narrative. It is as if a manipulative agent was trying to create a sense of confusion in order to better portray the fragmented self of the main character:

> But although he could not express it to anyone, he sometimes felt wanting, as though he were living only half a life, in his job, at home; the other half he was barely aware of, but felt it hovering beneath the surface like some astonishing sea creature, waiting for him to claim it (Senior 1995: 111).

Here, an omniscient narrator is telling readers how the main character feels. The word "half" is repeated several times to give the impression of fragmentation and distortion. The main character appears as a sea creature that hovers under the glass of the boat, like

the ones Eric saw when he was a child, without being able to escape. Half of his self-remained stuck in that time in which he was forming his identity. Eric tries to carry out the life he is supposed to live but he cannot feel complete. By giving information in small bits, the narrator is prompting the reader to re-write the story at the same time the main character is writing it, but merely as they choose. There are several sketches that join together at the end of the story and help us to understand the bigger picture. Eventually though, the reader would have interpreted everything in the manner the narrator had arranged it in advance. It is as if the main character's ordeal develops in a parallel progression to that of the reader's, as they have to solve the puzzle the narrator has arranged for them. Both the author and the narrator select the things that are to be told. The entire story of the character is not relayed; only those parts that the narrator deems relevant. This is why it begins the same way it ends, as if everything has only been interplay between the narrator and the text itself as it is constructed. Readers only get Eric's view of things. The insertion of the narrator within the text and the fictional space of the characters along with the fact that the narration is not following a linear pattern creates a feeling of confusion. The self-reflexive disposition of metafiction acts by creating a dialogue between reader and narrator/writer, and between reader and text. Senior clearly trespasses upon the margins of the narration providing the reader with bits of information here and there, the reader then has to organise the events to fully understand the direction of the text and be able to interpret it.

At this stage the reader emerges as an active re-writer at the mercy of a manipulative agent, who in this case is Senior performing the role of the narrator. Even more, she is performing the role of a narrator who knows the story through the eyes of the man in the room at the beginning. Therefore, the reliability of this narrator is not clear. On one hand, the protagonist sees reality in his own manner, and therefore he is

perfectly reliable; on the other hand, reality is seen through old memories of childhood and the subsequent gaps such a reality provokes. This can be noted in the lack of chronology of the text, as well as in the mixture of an omniscient narrator's voice with free indirect and direct styles.

Is there something of the boy looking through the glass bottom in the boat still in Eric? It is clear that there is something still; maybe not in the physical aspect but in regards his identity construction. Apparently, he is not that boy anymore; yet his memories bring him back to that point, to the time in which his life could have been different. His father's indifference as a boy still haunts him. Readers have the feeling that until the male character is able to cope with his own past, with his own history, he will not be able to carry on.

By emphasising fragmentation and distortion of the male protagonist's self, the author achieves a literary destabilising effect, and such destabilization is central to the development of the story. The process of recasting the past by the use of memory remains as one of the most outstanding elements in the story. It serves the main character to analyse his current situation. An awareness of one's history is the first step toward understanding one's self. As the story develops, the main character feels the need to move on, to escape again. When Sybil cuts her hair, he feels she has lost her essence:

> What upset him the most was that her hair-combing ritual had come to an end, and what was she without her hair? That was one of the things he loved about her: she had a thick head of hair, natural, unstraightened, which she used to comb out slowly every night, rub with oil, and then twist into small bumps all over her head… as she came to bed, he imagined every night she was born anew (Senior 1995: 106-107).

Sybil finds herself alone in a world she does not belong to.

There is a transposition of images into written language. The narrator seems to be adapting the images in the protagonist's mind into a narrative sequence. Eric used to look at Sybil while she carried out her combing ritual. He seems to miss it. This image gives Sybil a certain mystery and innocence, Eric used to miss the world he used to belong to. Yet, it appears that Sybil has lost it as well. Eric starts feeling uneasy and unbalanced again. The feeling of isolation and of not finding his own way in life is perceived with this image, the one that opens and closes the story.

In the current chapter, I have analysed two stories by Olive Senior: "Window" and "The Glass-Bottom Boat". I have elaborated on the notion of hybridity and how it has influenced post-colonial writers with examples from Senior's short stories. In both stories, the author tackles issues related to race and gender in colonial Jamaica. She deals with social constrictions long inscribed in the colonised people, and their great influence in the colonised subject. In the next chapter, I will continue developing postcolonial matters and their influence on the postcolonial world, focusing on the importance of reminiscing as a means of dealing with one's present circumstances.

Chapter Three: Intertextual Memories in Senior's "Discerner of Hearts" and Cliff's "Screen Memory".

This current chapter deals with intertextuality, a notion that appears in postcolonial texts as a way of challenging the traditional discourse imposed during the times of the Empire, and an idea that will be elaborated upon on the following pages. Firstly, the theory of intertextuality and the way it has been crucial in postcolonial discourse will be explained. Secondly, two stories by Senior and Cliff concerning the theory of intertextuality will be analysed. Since it was first coined in Julia Kristeva's work *Word, Dialogue and Novel* in 1966, the concept of intertextuality has developed into one of the most frequently employed terms in contemporary literary and cultural studies. Countless theorists and critics have attempted to define it in a wide array of explanations. In general terms, they all agree in saying that 'intertextuality' assumes that no text can exist as a closed system but as a part of a greater network, or "super-text". As Allen describes in his critical work, *Intertextuality*, the meaning of a text can only be traced by finding out how it relates and refers to prior texts within the literary network (Allen 2000: 1). Contemporary literary theory claims that interpreting a text basically consists of finding the existing textual associations contained within the huge network that is literature as a whole.

In the introduction to their critical study, *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, Worton and Still suggest that although the term itself dates back to the 1960s, it is surprising to note how theories based on the concept of intertextuality can be found wherever there have been discourses about texts, and that therefore, it is as old as human culture (Worton and Still 1991: 2). These two authors provide readers with a selection of theories that present striking commonalities with some contemporary approaches on the subject; in their view, Plato's Socratic dialogues embody Bakhtinian dialogism, which is the basis of the notion Kristeva later termed intertextuality. In line

with this last comparison, Worton and Still argue that Aristotle's theory of imitation can be identified with Bakhtin's monologic pole of discourse due to the fact that for Aristotle, dramatic creation is "the reduction of a mass of texts known to the poet, and probably to the audience as well" (Worton and Still 1991: 4). There have been outstanding approaches to this notion from its origins in Saussurean linguistics and Bakhtin's dialogism to its usage as an intentional strategy in twentieth century cultural movements such as feminism and post-colonialism. This dissertation primarily focuses on these aforementioned approaches.

Although Bakhtin never mentioned the term 'intertextuality' in his writings, he is regarded by many as the founder of the theory, as he conceived and developed it under the name of 'dialogism' in his collection of essays, *The Dialogic Imagination*. The starting point of the relation between Bakhtin and the concept of intertextuality can be located in his work at the Formalist School of Russian Literary Theory. Elaine Rusinko devotes a part of her essay to the analysis of the most significant Soviet theoreticians who are in her view representative of the concept of intertextuality (Rusinko 1979: 213). She concludes that the meanings of words depend on the context in which they are inscribed. This idea is prior to the perception of the significance of "context," considered not as a single text but as the whole corpus of an author. This school contributes greatly to create a diachronic perspective of the idea of context by providing a reasonable alternative to Saussure's assumptions, highly influential in the works of previous formalists. The central line of Bakhtin's reasoning is that as the word is in a continuous process of change; its meaning is always subject to an individual context at any particular time. Therefore, it should be studied within the medium of dialogical discourse, not within a fixed system of language (Rusinko 1979: 215). To study words in this manner implies an awareness of "the other," or interlocutor, and of

the dialogue itself. Bakhtin's work can be expanded and directed to poetic language, considering a text as an artistic whole, which belongs to a certain context. A critical work of a piece of literature has to be able to interpret the text considering how its limits blur with an intertextual reading. Bakhtin's work introduces the idea of social dimension to the notion of intertextuality:

> Not only the meaning of the utterance but also the very fact of its performance is of historical and social significance, as in general, is the fact of its realization in the here and now, in given circumstances, at a certain historical moment, under the conditions of a given social situation (Allen 2000: 17).

For him, language and the text cannot be studied as something abstract losing sight of their social dimension. Language has to be a synchronic system due to the fact that it is in a constant process of change. Bakhtin's theory of dialogism is built upon the premise that all utterances are dialogic; they are only meaningful if we consider what has been formerly said and how it has influenced others. Discourse is double-voiced because it is formed by two distinct sources: the pre-existing meaning of words and the intention of the interlocutor at a precise moment (Bakhtin 1981: 95). Dialogism, therefore, constitutes an essential element of language and communication. It is the addresivity of the utterance that becomes an indispensable feature of language; every utterance is a response to former utterances and is directed to specific recipients (Allen 2000: 21).

In *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981), Bakhtin expanded his theory of language to literature. He divides literary texts into two different poles, the monologic and the dialogic. The former trope corresponds to specified categories of poetry such as epic and types of lyric. Bakhtin considers these genres monologic because they emphasise a sole authoritative voice upon the rest of the world. In his view, these monologic literary varieties contrast with the dialogic form *par excellence,* which is the novel, where the reader encounters a selection of dissimilar perspectives. This refers to the fact that each

character in a novel embodies a distinctive ideological position, and vision of the world, which are totally expressed by their mode of speech. As he asserts in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics:*

> He (Dostoevsky) constructs not a character, nor a type, nor a temperament; in fact he constructs no objectified image of the hero at all, but rather the hero's discourse about himself and his world (Bakhtin 1984: 43).

In narrative modes, as distinguished from poetry, there is no authorial voice but an array of characters that are supposed to possess their own consciousness. Even more, no voice stands above any other. The different voices contained in the text are calls and answers to other discourses within the fictional world of the novel (Allen 2000: 23). In contrast to the objective and authoritative voices in poetry, for Bakhtin, in narrative texts even the author appears to be a part of the polyphony of discourses (Bakhtin 1984: 43). This assertion may represent the beginning of Barthes' post-structuralist conception of the death of the author in modern literature. Allen affirms that the polyphonic novel struggles against the idea of a unique and official point of view or ideological position (2000: 24). Then, he adds that in Bakhtinian logic, dialogism is not simply concerned with the clash between the various characters' perspectives, but in addition, it is a core feature of each character's own discourse (Allen 2000: 24). As an example, he refers to the modernist technique of stream of consciousness, which preferably demonstrates how dialogic discourse can take place within the words of a solitary character. He quotes one of Leopold Bloom's internal monologues in James Joyce's *Ulysses* to demonstrate how the character directs their utterance towards diverse addressees as well as including parts of texts they appeared to have read beforehand, along with significant *clichés* (2000: 25).

Jill Felicity Durey proposes a singular dimension to Bakhtin's dialogism in her essay "The State of Play and Interplay in Intertextuality" (1991). For her, the core

insight in Bakhtin's theory is the idea that dialogism refers to the dialogue that exists between the novelist and early writers, not between their texts, for those texts require human meditation to achieve the necessary dialogical effect (Durey 1991: 617). She says that the dialogue is not merely the depiction of a language system we obtain in a novel, but also the interplay between the author and the text. Later in her article she states that in Bakhtin's account, there is no presupposed innocence on the part of the quoting novelist. Bakhtin leads us to assume that the novel is never entirely original because it is the result of the mixture of the writer's spontaneity and his or her knowledge of tradition. The idea that literature has been traditionally nourished by literature is crucial in Bakhtin's approach. Bakhtin's theory of dialogism consists of three significant constituents; texts, writers and intertexts. Yet, Durey argues that no subsequent development of this theory has incorporated the three of them and the way they relate to one another (Durey 1991: 618). While structuralism has to do with paying attention to the text within a larger context or network, leaving the roles of readers and writers aside; other contemporary analyses of the theory have focused on the writer without giving the text the required deliberation.

Kristeva's principal credit, apart from coining the term *intertextuality,* is to have generated this literary theory after having broadened Bakhtin's concept of dialogism. She combined it with the Saussurean study of language as a synchronic system. Kristeva's main interest is the text. The emergent poststructuralist thought and principally the French writers associated with the *Tel Quel* Journal criticised Saussure's synchronic model of language as Bakhtin had done before, because they believed it did not pay enough attention to the subject with specific intentions of performing the utterances (Allen 2000: 31). Thus for them this model lacks social dimension. This argument has a certain resemblance to Bakhtin's, which judged Saussure's theory as an

abstract one only capable of keeping its objectivity by avoiding the important cultural dimension of language. Kristeva criticised Saussure's notion of stable signification and centred her study on the transformation of his idea of semiology. It is from a mixture of Kristeva's study of Bakhtin's dialogism and Saussure's semiology that the idea of intertextuality is claimed to have emerged. Her theory considers texts to be constantly transforming rather than as static entities. This idea implies that texts are not finished or closed systems but rather structures with unstable boundaries that encourage readers to get involved in the production of meaning. Moreover, literature in her approach can be understood as an open field where all texts are connected, as they are composed with fluid boundaries that allow the sharing of utterances and structures.

The gestation of the theory of intertextuality, highly influenced by Bakhtin's dialogism, took place in Kristeva's work, *Desire in Language*, mainly in "Word, Dialogue and the Novel" and "The Bounded Text". She points out that a text is "a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text" (Kristeva 1980: 36). According to this, writers do not create their texts originally but as a compilation of pre-existing texts. Texts are not isolated but enclosed within a particular culture or cultural textuality. Kristeva's account of intertextuality differs from Bakhtin's dialogism in the fact that her main interest lies in the text and not in the subject that produces and consumes it. Despite this divergence, she also insists on placing texts within a larger system of cultural signification or cultural textuality from where their meaning is generated. In relation to this, Allen argues that society presents a conflict in the signification of words; the text stands for this conflict (Allen 2000: 36). A text is built upon a compilation of fragments of the social text. These fragments are described by Kristeva as 'idéologèmes', a term she borrowed from Bakhtin:

> The concept of text as *idéologème* determines the very procedure of semiotics, by studying them as intertextuality, considers it as such within (the text of) society and history (Kristeva 1980: 37).

Kristeva concludes that any text is constructed as a "mosaic of quotations" and that every text is the "absorption and transformation of another" (Kristeva 1980: 66). From the above quotation, we can assert that a text is a mosaic of previous textual elements that possess a meaning in the text itself and another in the historical and social context it belongs to, a fact that makes it doubly meaningful. These doublings are the two semiotic orientations Kristeva gives to the textual word, deeming them 'horizontal' and 'vertical' (Durey 1991: 619). The former refers to "the subject of the written passage and to the addressee" and orients itself laterally. The latter directs itself vertically "towards the earlier or contemporary body of literature" (Durey 1991: 619).

Even though, the principal focus on Kristeva's theory is the text, she also studied the subject as it exists in writing (Allen 2000: 40). According to Worton and Still (1991), intertextual relations are passionate ones. This can be applied to Kristeva's work as she bases her analysis of literature on desire and the drives of the split subject. For her as well as for other poststructuralist scholars such as Barthes, who studies the position of the subject and the author in texts in a deeper manner, the subject is lost in writing. For them, when we come across a text, it is unlikely to identify the textual "I" with the authorial "I". The language in literary texts does not give readers an obvious access point to the subject. Allen states that Kristeva esteems the subject in writing as double because its utterances are always intertextual and the signifiers that refer to the subject are not constant but persistently changing (2000: 42). She provides Bakhtin's dialogism as double-voiced, with a psychological dimension. Kristeva also applies Lacan's psychoanalytic accounts of the *Semiotic* and the *Symbolic*. Kristevan intertextuality has to do with the *split subject* (1991: 46). The subject is split between

conscious and unconscious, the pre-linguistic stage and language, the rational and the irrational, the social and the pre-social, between the Semiotic and the Symbolic. According to Kristeva, intertextuality stands as the third operation within the Semiotic process. In *Revolution in Poetic Language,* she talks about intertextuality as a passage from one sign system to another, by altering the old phase; the subject enacts the possibility of creation (1984: 4). Texts do not just employ former textual components but they in fact transform them. Kristeva re-terms her theory utilizing word transposition in order to avoid its reduction into mere issues of influence with no questioning. Intertextuality therefore, can be defined as the existing interrelation that situates texts in a constant fluctuation, producing infinite change.

In *The Architext,* Gèrard Genette suggests that poetics should be concerned with the architext, understood as an array of textual categories such as genre or thematic, rather than with individual texts (1992: 60). This work completes a trilogy along with *Palimpsests* and *Paratexts,* in which the author develops his study on structural poetics. It is in *Palimpsests* where accounts on intertextuality can be found. Genette includes intertextuality within a higher category, which is transtextuality: "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts" (Genette 1997: 1). The idea of transtext includes issues of imitation and transformation. This idea is crucial in understanding postcolonial literature as representing the theory of hybridity and as it has been used by postcolonial authors to question traditional ways of writing. The most outstanding constituent of Genette's approach is how architexts need to be built within the entire literary system:

> The subject of poetics is not considered in its singularity…but rather the architext…the architextuality of the text…the entire set of general or transcendental categories- types of discourse, modes of enunciation, literary genre – from which emerges each singular text (Genette 1997: 1).

Genette divides transtextuality into different subcategories. The first one refers to Kristeva's notion of intertextuality defined as "the actual presence of a text within another" (Genette 1997: 2). Allen (2000: 101) suggests that Genette's approach endows readers with pragmatic intertextual associations between explicit elements of individual texts without taking into account the semiotic processes of social textual signification. Apart from Kristevan intertextuality, there are, according to Genette, three other types of transtextuality: paratextuality, in which he marks the relation between the body of the text and its title, graphics, epigraphs, etc; metatextuality, or the process by which a text can be analysed as a commentary of another text; and finally, hypertextuality, which establishes the relationship between two texts when it is not a simple commentary (Genette 1997: 2-3).

In *Palimpests*, Genette quotes Rifaterre and recognises that this theoretician provides a broader definition of intertextuality. Rifaterre encompasses all the categories embedded in what he calls transtextuality (Genette 1997: 2). He avers that "the text refers not to objects outside itself, but to the intertext" and points out that "the words of the text signify not only by referring to things, but by presupposing other texts" (Rifaterre 1978: 228). In his view, "the text can control its own decoding" (Rifaterre 1983:2). He works on the hermeneutic examination of intertextuality not merely as a characteristic of texts but as a defining quality of reading. In line with Rifaterre's study, Allen, (2000: 116), explains that reading occurs in two consecutive stages: the first one is linear and relates textual signs to external referents, and the second one is a non-linear one in which interpretation is required to elicit semiotic items and structures generating a non-referential meaning of texts. Worton and Still (1991: 26) argue that the significance of this model is that it emphasises each individual reading as unique and that it contributes to understand reading as something active. It considers readers to be

an important aspect of text analysis because they are capable of identifying the intertext embedded in it. The recognition of intertextual traces provides the text with semantic and structural meaning. Rifaterre's concern with the effect that texts may have on readers is presupposing a literary competence on the part of readers, as he expresses in the following quotation:

> All that is needed for the text to function is then presupposition of the intertext. Certainly, presupposition itself cannot exist unless the reader is familiar with the structures organizing a representation of reality: but these are the very stuff of our linguistic competence (Rifaterre 1978: 239).

Here, the structuralist critic implies that literary competence does not only require the awareness of the language used, but how and for what purpose it is chosen by the author. So, should this awareness be conscious or unconscious? Is it something that we culturally apprehend? Readers should be able to distinguish the intertext due to their literary competence; we are never free when approaching a text, and this is an example of when intertextuality is at work. Both the author and the reader are aware of their mutual understanding.

Within poststructuralism, Roland Barthes emerges as one of the most interesting critics regarding the theory of intertextuality. This is contrary to structuralist scholars, whose main concern is that of disturbing notions of meaning in texts. Barthes' definition of intertextuality comes from the idea that any text is dependent upon previous ones; he conceives a text as an entity dependent "not on the ambiguity of its contents but on what might be called the stereographic plurality of its weave of signifiers (etymologically, the text is a tissue, a woven fabric)" (Barthes 1977: 159). Therefore, by lacing previous texts together, intertextuality produces a plurality of meanings that can be found in what has already been said and written. For Barthes, a text is a "multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original,

blend and clash (Barthes 1977: 146). In relation to this, Allen, (2000: 74), concludes that intertextuality has less to do with texts themselves than with the social constraints where different discourses and stereotypes are inscribed. For Barthes, intertextuality is the whole cultural code: "intertextuality is the impossibility of living outside the infinite text…the book creates the meaning, the meaning creates life" (Barthes 1977: 36).

Barthes' views on intertextuality as a literary strategy utterly disrupt long-held assumptions about the production of texts, as he focuses his attention on notions regarding the roles of author and reader. His idea of intertextuality destroys the concept of authority. The idea that there is an individual who creates meaning and owns texts is rendered superfluous since the text is sure to have already existed within the intertextual space. Just as the figure of the author is disturbed in Barthes' version of intertextuality, so is that of the reader. In his celebrated essay "The Death of the Author", he claims that "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author" (Barthes 1977: 148). Barthes and Kristeva share the idea that the subject is split in writing: "its (significance) puts the subject into the text, not as the projection, not even as a fantasmatic one…but as a 'loss'" (Allen 2000: 52). The loss of the self and the fracturing of the subject in writing are linked to the dissolution of the author. The author in Barthes, as Worton and Still suggest, becomes simply a reading effect (1991: 20). Barthes destroys the myth of filiation in literature, the traditional idea that meaning comes merely from an individual authorial consciousness. The modern writer is in constant contact with texts, interpreting their meaning is unlikely to come only from a powerful author but rather from language observed as intertextual. This change in the view of the traditional author assumes that texts can infinitely be rewritten and re-interpreted by different readers. Barthes' idea can be compared as well with Bakhtin's idea of monologic and dialogic texts, the former being ruled by a sole authorial voice

controlling the narrative, whereas in the latter, we get a multiplicity of perceptions, not only one voice, but several, which are equal in status. Thus, the metaphorical death of the author rejects traditional authority, forcing readers to adopt an active role in order to interpret and connect the intertextual traces of texts.

Within the influential poststructuralist framework, the conventional idea of an omnipotent author who controls every aspect of the narrative to produce a unique standard meaning is deconstructed. For postcolonial writers, along with other situated critics such as feminists, the absence of the author results in oppression. Highly concerned with minority groups, one of their main purposes is to authorise their narratives and to ascribe specific interpretations to them to subvert traditional representations of gender and race in literature, history and society. One can neither read nor write without considering these matters. Postcolonial writers have devoted their texts to revisit and rewrite canonical texts that traditionally have left them voiceless. These writers ironically appropriate existing imagery of the colonial subjects so as to transform them creatively, by giving them different shapes, which make them suitable in achieving their rebellious objectives. Allen argues that a monologic depiction of literature as an inescapable closed canon, like the ones offered by critics such as Frank Raymond Leavis or Harold Bloom, creates a conflict with the essence of intertextuality, because it leaves out texts written by postcolonial writers, which are automatically excluded from the canon (2000: 144). He adds, talking specifically about feminism, that using Bakhtin's double-voiced discourse allows "a critical focus which can capture the 'otherness' of women within patriarchal culture and society" (Allen 2000: 160). The same idea can be applied to postcolonial writing. As has already been mentioned in previous chapters of this thesis, the colonised subject writing about colonization becomes the ironic other, because of being neither White nor from the

West; they experience this 'otherness' that contributes to the creation of an innovative corpus of stories in which traditional voices are displaced. Postcolonial writers promote different types of 'otherness' by creating a new version of history that had never before been told. As Homi Bhabha points out, hybridity at work reverses the official discourse by means of disavowal (Bhabha 1985: 156). Postcolonial authors write as a resistance to patriarchal colonial monologism. By a subtle use of intertextual echo, Michelle Cliff and Olive Senior challenge the monological discourse of the coloniser and the colonised other, by giving their main characters the discursive voice in their stories. As Allen explains:

> …a return to Bakhtin helps retain not only the notion of subjecthood, of the struggle for identity and agency, but also that of the inevitable 'double-voiced' or intertextual nature of the speech and writing of such marginalized, 'othered' subjects (Allen 2000: 164).

In relation to this, one can recast Bhabha's idea of 'in-betweeness' of colonial subjects. It refers to the way postcolonial subjects deal with issues of race, gender or class. According to Allen, Bhabha's 'double or in-between' position is inextricably linked to Bakhtin's idea of 'dialogue' (Allen 2000: 164-165). He argues that in this context, dialogism implies not a simple conversation between equal subjects, but rather the clash between utterances within a certain discursive space. He suggests, quoting critic Aldon L. Nielsen's work *Writing between the Lines: Race and Intertextuality* (1994), that a combination of Kristeva's intertextual theory and Bakhtinian dialogism produces a model of reading in which discourse is both ours and of the other (Allen 2000: 166). In this model, the writing split-self can find resistance to monologic definitions of race and gender.

Senior and Cliff recover latent cultural and historical content and construct their own narratives upon early feminist transgressed thought, enlarge it substantially, and

transform it in a contemporary context. By doing so, they create a narrative in which two different texts are in conflict with one another. Intertextuality generates tension between the elements borrowed from the source text, and the new ones incorporated in a subversive manner. According to Rachel Blau DuPlessis (in Arnds 2001: 418), there are two different types of revisionary mythmaking that could be applied to these authors as modern rewritings of traditional accounts: displacement or the shifting attention to otherness in the story, and deligitimation, or a criticism of priorities of narrative. In the following analysed texts, the native woman figure is centralised by displacing the White male perspective, so the various roles that determined the postcolonial renditions are delegitimized and re-evaluated. Olive Senior's short story, "Discerner of Hearts", is a contemporary story told like a tale in regards to its structure and the treatment of certain elements. The resemblance of this story to a fairy tale will lead the focus to the intertextual interplay this fact provokes, as intertextuality can be deployed as a means of disrupting and ironically questioning previous canonical forms. In Bakhtinian words, both text and intertext establish a dialogue in which the reader and the identification of certain structural and content elements are crucial.

In "Discerner of Hearts", there are certain elements and narrative techniques that clearly remind us of classic fables: the introduction of what seems to be an omniscient narrator, magic elements such as the use of *obeah*, or the challenge for recognition the hero has to overcome. Intertextuality needs this recognition on the part of the reader so as to have a *raison d'être*, or a reason to exist. Intertextuality at work takes the form of boundary crossing: it crosses both text and genre divisions (O'Donnell & Davis 1989: xiv). Senior has deliberately re-casted fairy tale patterns outside "the space for children's bedtime stories" and put them into a more complex form in order to explore specific cultural issues such as the use of magic and *obeah*, race and gender

relationships, as well as the development of the characters. This story begins with a girl, Theresa, who is about to cross the street alone to go to Mr Burnham's place. She goes there to help her family's Black servant, Cissy, to deal with *obeah*. Cissy thinks the wife of the man whose child she is carrying has performed *obeah* on her. This issue has led her to lock herself in her cot out of depression because she thinks that she has lost her baby. The only man in the Black community who can deal with *obeah* is Mr Burnham, known by the Blacks as a healer and a "discerner of hearts". Therefore, Theresa, facing the danger of being snatched by the Blackartman, an evil figure who uses the hearts of children to perform black magic, decides to go to Mr Burnham's to ask him to help Cissy. There are two clearly differentiated communities in the story; that of the rich, White landowners, and that of the Black servants. Each of them has different principles and rules. For Cissy, even though her mistress does not approve, getting pregnant is something valuable in her community. So, she finds the best possible candidate: Fonso. Other Black girls have carried Fonso's children before, so, even though he is married to Ermine, Cissy asks Mr Burnham to perform magic rituals on him so that she can get pregnant. Finally, Cissy is pregnant but her guilt makes her believe she has lost her baby. Theresa's mother calls Dr Carter, the family doctor, to see her, and he confirms that she is already pregnant. Yet, Cissy cannot believe it and remains pinned to her cot. This is the reason why Theresa, whose love for Cissy is immense, decides to cross the road to seek Dr Burnham's help. Theresa is very shy and insecure. Her mother is always bragging about her sisters' beauty and abilities and never compliments our protagonist. Cissy is the one who encourages Theresa not to feel bad about it and shows her all her good qualities. This is why she finds refuge in Cissy and does not want to lose her.

Angela Carter (1984) in her notes to fairy tales while writing *The Bloody Chamber*, explains how fairy tales are not unique forms. Maria M. Tatar states that

nearly every element in them is unstable and subject to mutability, from the name of the character to the ending, due primarily to the widespread oral tradition behind the literary form (Tatar in Sellers 2001: 9). Not only have these fables changed through time, but also from one culture to another. It is the unfixed shape of the tales that convert them in the perfect genre for altered endings. Marina Warner declares that the possibility of including new elements and changing others, as well as their strong connotations in society as myths of behaviour and instruction, have provided many creative writers with a medium to express their revolt towards what they consider needs amending in their cultures, along with an opportunity to redefine the roles inflicted upon them in a certain society (Warner 1995: 193). The open sphere of the tale gives writers a good opportunity to use them to recount their cultural experiences and the principal concerns of their time. As mentioned earlier, "Discerner of Hearts" has particular aspects taken from the fairy tale genre. Olive Senior when asked about the fairy tale qualities of this story agreed saying that she "saw the story in terms of a rite of passage for the girl with symbolic objects and properties from the fairy tale" (see Appendix). This chapter will concentrate primarily on the most significant changes or turns given to the story in comparison to the canon established for fairy tales. The following pages will evaluate how the conventional fairy tale pattern has been maintained, but also reoriented in terms of narrative voice challenging matters of authorship because of its textual organisation and contents.

Opie credits a number of outstanding characteristics to the fairy tale genre. One of them is that the action is always placed in the fictional space of the remote past when a variety of options are achievable and believable (Opie 1980: 15-18). This effect is reached by the utilization of formulaic phrases such as *"Once upon a time"*. In contrast to this, we have Senior's story, which is told in a typical fairy tale land, in a rural

setting, and the author gives us enough details to let us know the story takes place in a specific setting in a concrete period of time; twentieth century Jamaica. The most relevant reference to this is that the capital city, Kingston, is named several times in the story.

Senior's story begins with Theresa doubting whether she should cross the main road or not because she has been told not to do it alone:

> She let herself out by the back door and carefully shut it behind her, and ran through the short cut that led to the main road, hoping that no one would see. At the main road she hesitated, not because she didn't know the way but because she was terrified at what she was doing, her heart was thumping loudly against her chest, and because they were always being told never to walk on the road alone. (Senior 1995: 1).

Instead of starting with a formulaic form to situate the story in a remote past and describe the principal character's physical characteristics and their principal personality traits, Senior begins the story directly in the throes of the protagonist's life. The first thing we read about are the character's feelings towards what she is about to do. Throughout her whole life she has been told not to cross the street alone because terrible things may happen to her. Yet the development of both the story and the maturity of this character, require that she takes this course of action. She knows what she is doing is wrong but she needs to do it so as to help her friend. What readers first encounter is her fear about the decision she has made and the possibility of something horrible happening to her, then the narrator introduces the events that occurred before Theresa's daring action. Only the last two sections of the story follow the event of the girl crossing the road, and it is this very event which definitely changes her into someone different; the girl takes a big step forward into her self-development process.

"Screen Memory", by Michelle Cliff, is about repressed memories, about dreams, and about finding one's own way in life. The subsequent paragraphs will

explain the importance of memory in this story and how coping with it may act as a healer. In Cliff's story, the interaction between past and present is signalled by memory. Memory is constructed as a series of flashbacks that fragment the temporal continuity of the story, and give readers a hint of the past experiences of the characters. Therefore, textual boundaries as well as temporal ones become fluid and can be easily crossed. In a Kristevan reading, one can consider that memory works as a means of coping with the cultural colonial past of the main characters. Intertextuality here is marked by signalling the colonial discourse and its uses and oppressions, as they are contrasted with the evolution of the postcolonial subjects. Memory serves as a dialogue between both idiosyncrasies. At a textual level, memory works as a healing agent. At another level, intertextuality does the same when considered a subversive strategy employed in post-colonialism or feminism. As it has already been explained, postcolonialism deploys intertextual theory in order to question and re-shape traditional assumptions regarding racial issues from an innovative perspective. As a transgressive technique, intertextuality soothes the anxiety colonial subjects feel when they come to terms with their past representations and the imposed inability to author their own lives and stories. Remembrance becomes a decisive requirement in curing the unease produced by the lack of control they have over their lives. It is essential to remember and appropriate the roles given to women both in literary and non-literary texts so as to purge the anxiety this generates. Adrienne Rich, in her work, *On Lies, Secrets, and Silence: Selected Prose 1966-1978* (1979), describes revisionary mythmaking as an act of survival for women. Women need to recast the past and transform it so as to break the power of tradition over them:

> Re-vision- the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction- is for women more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival. Until we can understand the assumptions in

> which we are drenched we cannot know ourselves. And this drive to self-knowledge, for women, is more than a search for identity: it is a part of our refusal of the self-destructiveness of male-dominated society… We need to know the writing of the past, and know it differently than we have ever known it; not to pass on a tradition but to break its hold over us (Rich 1979: 35).

If one applies this to these postcolonial writer's works, the anxiety produced by the memories that haunt them, and the negative effects they perform in their development as individuals able to direct their fates is reflected in the reaction of paralysis of the characters in relation to the incidents they are experiencing. Michelle Cliff, when asked about 'revision' in an interview, said that for her, the term was not intended to correct, but only to see events differently: "I would say "re-vision" in the sense of re-visioning something, not in the sense of revising as in correcting it, or editing it, but in trying to see something from a different point of view" (Cliff in Clawson 2011: np). For Cliff, revising her own culture and experience seems to be a necessary step in rebuffing against the stereotypical view European colonisers have provided of former colonies. She claims it is necessary to show the complexity of these cultures that have been influenced by European traditions, but that have also contributed to the construction of our current world, as they closely related to the colonisers.

The short story by Michelle Cliff is about repressed memories, about dreams, and about finding one's own way in life. The subsequent paragraphs will explain the importance of memory in this story and how coping with it may act as a healer. This thesis will also tackle the manner in which the author organises the text, mixing the memories and the fictional present of the main character. In Cliff's story, the interaction between past and present is signalled by memory. Memory is constructed as a series of flashbacks that fragment the temporal continuity of the story and give readers a hint of the past experiences of the characters. Therefore, textual boundaries as well as temporal ones become fluid and can be easily crossed.

In the story, past instances of the life of the main female character are intertwined with her thoughts in the present. While the woman is bed-ridden, certain memories of her past come to her mind. Events appear as a series of slides; as if her brain were selecting them, like something that had been recorded and that she remembers very vividly. The representation in the story of the "presence of the past" is portrayed like a film on screen. Even the imaginary camera in her mind captures details or panoramic views:

> There is a woman lying in bed. She has flown through a storm to the feet of her grandmother, who is seated atilt at the upright, on a bench which holds browned sheets of music. The girl's hair is glistening from the wet but not a strand is out of place. It is braided with care, tied with grosgrain. Her mind's eye brings the ribbon into closer focus; its elegant dullness, no cheap satin shine (Cliff 1990: 93).

In this excerpt, the narrator moves from a woman lying in bed, to the thoughts inside her head. The narrator describes, in detail, the image the woman has in her mind, even focusing the attention on the ribbon she remembers her to have been wearing. It is as if she were acting out her own past life in order to recount it. Her memories are mainly visual rather than verbal. It is then the narrator who transforms her memory into words. There is a transposition of images into written language. The narrator seems to be adapting the images in the protagonist's mind into a narrative sequence.

The story starts with the sound of jump rope that comes to the mind of the main character. From the jump rope marking time, her mind goes to the image of a queue of girls waiting to jump while they sing. Suddenly, the woman recognises herself in the scene:

> The sound of a jumprope came around in her head, softly, steadily marking time. Steadily slapping ground packed hard by the feet of girls.
>
> Franklin's in the White House. Jump/Slap. Talking to the ladies. Jump/Slap. Eleanor's in the outhouse. Jump/Slap. Eating chocolate babies. Jump/Slap.

> Noises of a long drawn-out summer's evening years ago. But painted in such rich tones she could touch it.
>
> A line of girls wait their turn. Gathered skirts, sleeveless blouses, shorts, bright, flowered-peach, pink, aquamarine. She spies a tomboy in a stripped polo shirt and cuffed blue jeans.
>
> A girl slides from the middle of the line. The woman recognizes her previous self…the rope, their song, which jars her and makes her sad.
>
> And this is inside her head.
>
> She senses there is more to come (Cliff 1990: 89).

This way, the narrator introduces all the details of the past life of the character. The woman remembers herself looking at this scene and it is described with every detail; the sound of the rope, the song, the colours…The narrator tells us that all this is inside the character's mind, and also talks about her feelings both towards the scene and towards the rest of scenes the character has in her mind and how they have started to flow without her being able to control them. The scene is seen from the outside, as if everything was occurring on a screen or in a picture, as described by someone who sees everything from a different framework.

The main, female character was abandoned by her mother and left with her grandmother. Her father was White and the White ladies in the community claimed that her grandmother has not got the right to raise her, and that she had to be given to a decent White couple who had just lost their six year old girl. Once in her new house she did all she was told to do, but at night she escaped and came back to her grandmother. Both grandmother and granddaughter fled together, carrying the pianoforte the girl's mother had left her. They settled in a small town. There the girl meets Miss Ellinton, a teacher at her school, and her controversial friend Velma Jackson. Both women encourage Theresa to take some pictures of herself and enter them into a beauty contest. She does it and finally she abandons the small town in which she lives with her grandmother to become an actress.

Throughout the whole story, the narrator introduces characters and events without following either a chronological pattern or a logical order. This fact helps the narrator to create a playful interaction between the reader and the text; the narrator gives information in bits in order to fragment the character's discourse, and this is reflected in the structure of the story, which follows the same pattern. Later in the plot, the narrator tells the reader how the White ladies in the community came to her grandmother's to take her to a decent family:

> A flock of White ladies had descended on the grandmother, declaring she had no right to raise a White child and they explained that the girl was her granddaughter – sometimes it's like that. They did not hear. They took the girl by the hand, down the street, across the town, into the home of a man and a woman bereft of their only child by diphtheria (Cliff 1990: 92).

It was not allowed for a girl with White blood to be raised by a Black woman alone, which is paradoxical because at that time most White girls were cared for by Black servants. Probably, what is not acceptable for the White ladies in this case is the fact that the Black woman is the girl's grandmother and that there is a consanguinity link between them. This is why they believe she must stay with a decent White couple in order to situate the girl into the position she is supposed to be because of her light skin colour. What they do not expect is that the connection the girl has with her grandmother would lead her to run away:

> Then, under cover of night, she let herself out the back door off the kitchen and made her way back, leaving the bed of a dead girl behind her. The sky pounded and the rain soaked her (Cliff 1990: 92).

She does not want to take the dead girl's place, neither in her family nor in her community. All she wants is to find shelter with her grandmother again, as the only link she has to her mother, to life and to herself. After her escape, they are bound to flee so that they can start anew without pressure. When she arrives at her grandmother's place the only thing the old woman says to her is that she hopes that the pianoforte is not

damaged in the move. It is as if darkness and the bad weather conditions had helped her in her escape. They are her allies. Later in the story the narrator tells us how the rain and the storm seem to be helping her, to be protecting her as a kind of grace:

> Two childish flights. In each the grace which was the rain, the fury which was storm chased her, saved her. In the morning the sky was clear. (Cliff 1990: 95).

Nature seems to be on her side. The night, the rain and the storm follow her escape, protecting her and helping her on the way. When everything was right and she was safe with her grandmother, the sky was clear again. The weather appears to be representing her emotional condition. When she is nervous and feels insecure, there are storms; and, when she feels safe again, the sun shines. The storm symbolises the inner turmoil that is affecting her as she escapes with the dead girl's clothes on; and darkness contrasting clearness stands for the way she sees her life without the protection of her grandmother. Once she comes back home to her grandmother, the skies clear and the weather improves again. Cliff is using pathetic fallacy[3] to link her character's sentiments to natural phenomena; she attributes sentiment to nature as if they behave in sympathy with human feelings. Cliff is emotionally appealing to her readers.

It seems that the whole story is a game played between the author herself, certain images of her own childhood in her mind, and the omniscient narrator who sometimes appears in the narrative. It is as if a manipulative agent was trying to create a sense of confusion in order to portray the fragmented self of the main character: she is neither White nor Black; in addition to this, there are certain aspects in her past that complicate her personal development. When the girl and her grandmother are escaping, the narrator comments how the boy in the truck with them is like the girl in this respect:

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[3] Pathetic fallacy: the attribution of sentiment to natural phenomena, as if they were in sympathy with human feelings (*The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, volume 2, 2006: A90).

> She looks anywhere but the boy. She has heard their 'White nigger' hisses often enough, as if her skin, her hair signify only shame, a crime against nature (Cliff 1990: 93).

His blood is neither pure White nor Black and this situates him in a threshold that also greatly complicates his self-development. The same happens to the girl in the story. Her appearance is that of a White person, but her lineage is Black too, and the only relative left for her is her grandmother, who is Black.

Both Cliff and Senior claim the authority of their narratives by appropriating a traditional discourse in historical accounts belonging to the canon, in an attempt to transform it to suit their ideals. On a different level the female characters they have created in their fictional worlds endeavour to cope with their traumatic pasts so as to prompt a change in their existence. In a similar way, the characters in the novels represent an 'other' trapped between past and future, who in addition are doubly stigmatised as women and foreigners in strange and inhospitable lands. The authors themselves are playing the role of "other"; of two women writers who try to possess their narratives within the "strange land" or as Showalter calls it, "in the wilderness" which is the colonial patriarchal literary institution. Intertextual memory appears to be the accurate solution to counter and contest long-held dominant narratives and discourses. The two stories dealt with in this chapter embrace this anxiety of remembering in order to develop as individuals. Postcolonial writers' key intent is to illustrate their preoccupation towards the "politics of rememory" in their narratives (Feng 1998: 2).

Lachman points out that the memory of the text is its intertextuality (Lachman in Döring 2002:14). It can perform a social function. By quoting, borrowing or parodying, contemporary writers preserve an array of cultural readings. As Tobias Döring puts it, as a constant weaving of connections in and between texts, "intertextuality both

generates and retraces a web of traditions, both activates and re-inscribes the recollections shared in the interpretant community" (Döring 2002: 14). History has been held in recent theories as a compilation of literary and non-literary texts that remain as vivid experiences and memories in people's thoughts. Historical intertextuality is embedded in these narratives in the form of political criticism. Bakhtin asserts that every age "re-accentuates in its own way the works of its most immediate past" (Bakhtin in Plasa 2000: 48). In relation to this, one may state that both Cliff and Senior, by means of fantasy and myth, are translating (in its broader sense of a reproduction, a re-writing of former historical texts into novels), a patriarchal text into a contemporary one within postcolonial feminist discourse.

Jackson (Jackson in Sellers 2001: 10) argues that this transposition of the narrative into a remote past, and the fact that it is usual to the genre to have the absolute authority of an omniscient narrator, causes the reader to become a passive receiver. In "Discerner of Hearts", this shifting process occurs. Even though there seems to be an omniscient narrator controlling the flow of actions in the story, the story is divided into sections, each of them told from the perspective of one of the characters. The narrator knows everything and appears to be an outsider. Yet, this whole process constitutes a further manipulation of the reader, who seems to know more than the characters. Apparently, the narrator manages to control every thought, word and action of the characters so as to involve the reader in the story, as a confidante. But, up to what point are readers controlled too? The narrative follows a pattern that may seem to involve readers fully as builders of the story; yet, information is only given as the narrator chooses. Once again, the reader is only permitted to know as much as the narrator wishes to allow. This strategy transforms the narrative into something open and with plenty of different interpretations.

The subsequent paragraphs will be dedicated to the explanation of the importance of memory in the two stories, both within the framework of the story as it is important for the main characters, as well as at the authors' level. The protagonists of the two works have to cope with their traumatic pasts in order to succeed in the creation of their present subjectivity as women and as members of a certain community. This will lead me to tackle how Senior and Cliff employ their stories as cultural translations so as to question and criticise their most recent historical and literary past. This last task is precisely what postcolonial writers attempt to achieve by utilizing intertextuality, which at the same time can be considered to be the link between past and present aimed at altering the future.

Apart from being situated on the frontier between two different cultures, as previous colonial subjects and, therefore, stigmatised as individuals, the protagonists of the two stories remain stuck in the margin between past and present. The representation in the novels of the "presence of the past", as Hutcheon puts it, (1989: 4) denotes historiographic metafiction's principal anxiety of how one can come to know the past today. According to many scholars such as Hutcheon or McHale, the relation between past and present is the unresolved contradiction of representation in contemporary fiction. Historiographic metafiction as a form of incorporating intertexts from history into certain narratives seems to be the most accurate mode to achieve this objective. In a sense, this is what the protagonists of the novels are doing at a different level: they incorporate instances of their past lives into their "present" existence in order to solve their own contradictory representations. Historiographic metafiction will be explored in more detail in the next chapter of this Thesis.

As both stories develop, the reader manages to build up all the events as they have occurred. This circumstance confers Senior and Cliff with the opportunity of

addressing issues related to the authority of texts. In "Discerner of Hearts", through the voice of the narrator, the author is giving herself the opportunity of positioning herself in relation to particular aspects of her native country in a certain period of time. The main character, Theresa, seems to be the alter ego of the narrator, as if Senior herself had thought, said or lived the words and situations in the story. Senior grew up in Jamaica to then move to Canada. Her memories of the island are probably biased by the image she had of it as a child. Even though the story is told in third person singular, there are instances in which the voice of Theresa both as narrator and as authorised voice appears: "Eventually Mama noticed something and called her into her bedroom…and could be heard raising her voice to her, something she didn't normally do". How could a supposedly removed narrator call one of the characters "Mama"? How could they possibly know that she "didn't normally" raise her voice to Cissy?

When reading the story, one has the impression that everything is told by a narrator, but through Theresa's eyes. The reader gets the information required in each moment of the narrative when Theresa gets it. A very vivid example of this is the fact that readers, contrarily to what would have happened in a fairy tale, get a picture of Mr Burnham's yard when Theresa enters in it, still filled with fear:

> Her courage began to fail and she would have turned back but, thinking of Cissy, she lifted the latch, pushed open the gate, and entered Mister Burnham's yard…All at once the sound of doves cooing drew her to side of the house, where she looked open-mouthed with amazement at all the things in Mister Burnham's yard. There were the flag-poles, which could be seen from the road, and the dovecotes, but there were other strange structures: tree stumps with calabash bowls perched on top of them; in some calabashes there were bougainvillea flowers and croton leaves, on another pole there was a strange metal object. Horseshoes were nailed up on the side of the house and the dovecote. There were plants and bushes growing everywhere, some up against the house, at the far side a whole field of them planted out in rows, looking not at all like the plants in other people's gardens (Senior 1995: 20).

Mister Burnham's yard is described as a sanctuary. Once Theresa enters it, she begins to understand Mr Burnham's duty. Everything seems strange to her; it is nothing like anything she has seen before, even the plants and bushes look different from those in other people's gardens. Theresa passes from a feeling of fear to one of amazement. It is at this moment that she begins to understand Mr Burnham's duty, by seeing the bushes and herbs Cissy talks about. Then she enters a building right behind the house and searches for more details; she does not know about this building's existence because it cannot be seen from the road:

> She never knew it was there, for it could not be seen from the road. It was a rectangular structure, much bigger than the house itself… At one end where the smaller room was located, there was a wooden platform. Every inch of the wall behind it, including the door cut into it, covered with paintings. She recognized scenes from the bible, Jesus and his disciples, and signs and symbols like those in church. But these didn't look quite like the religious scenes they got on their Sunday School picture cards. For one thing, they all run into one another with nothing to define each other, and they were much more colourful and lively…more and more it reminded her of a church…She felt very safe and peaceful there (Senior 1995: 21-22).

Theresa's curiosity leads her to enter this building. Her interest is a sign of the self-defining process she is going through. She needs to help Cissy and she needs to find out Mr Burnham's secret in order to do it. This is the first time Theresa decides something all by herself. She leaves all her worries and fears behind and decides to find the truth about the man she thinks may be the Blackartman, and about Cissy's illness. Once she starts finding elements that remind her of Church, one of the most important establishments in her culture, she begins to feel better and safer. All the paintings in Mr Burnham's sanctuary give her the confidence that she was previously lacking to carry on with her ordeal.

Before, there are attempts on the part of the narrator to describe Mr Burnham's yard, but how would s/he do it, without knowing what it was like? It seems that the

whole story is a game played between the author herself, certain images of her own childhood in her mind, and the omniscient narrator who sometimes appears in the narrative. The readers' first glimpse of the yard is when Theresa is peaking inside it:

> …they always try to peek through the gate as Mr Burnham stood behind it talking to Cissy…Since they were both very broad there was little room left to peep around or between them. Cissy said it wasn't good manners to peep inside people's yards… (Senior 1995: 3).

This creates a playful interaction between narrator, character and reader. The boundaries of the text are crossed when the narrator treats the reader like another character within the story. By giving information in small bits, the narrator is prompting the reader to re-write the story at the same time the main character is writing it, but merely as s/he chooses. There are several sketches which joined together at the end of the story help us to understand what all is about. Yet, readers eventually would have eventually interpreted everything in the manner the narrator had arranged it in advance. It is as if the main character's ordeal develops in a parallel progression to that of the readers', as they have to put together the puzzle the narrator has presented them.

The issue of textual authority is also central in Cliff's "Screen Memory". Through the voice of the narrator, the author is giving herself the opportunity of positioning herself in relation to particular aspects of her native country in a specific period of time. The main character seems to be the alter ego of the narrator, as if the narrator had already thought, said or lived the words and situations in the story. The narrator seems to recognise every place the character goes and every feeling the character has. Even though the story is told in third person singular, there are instances in which the voice of the female character both as narrator and as authorised voice appears. Almost at the end of the story, when the cleaning lady asks her to sign a piece of paper for her daughter, the character, after saying "I'll be glad", tells herself in first

person*:* "if I remember my name" (Senior 1995: 103). The change of the third person to a first person narrator is a clear hint of stream consciousness at work. The author has inserted herself and her readers into the protagonist's mind, showing us her thoughts.

By employing the stream of consciousness technique, the author deconstructs traditional modes of writing in order to help the exploration of the characters' thoughts; which generates a sense of fluidity. The reader crosses the traditional boundaries of the narrative recounted by a single narrative voice and is able to immerse themselves in the very depths of the character's interior life. This way of narrating is also considered fluid because of the structure it presents. It has the disorderly logic of dreams, of the unconscious, and as there is no coherent order, ideas emerge one after another without an apparent link between them. In this story, where the importance of memory is so evident, this technique seems to be quite appropriate; especially because everything is told from the perspective of a woman who is ill and is remembering everything from her bed while she is half-conscious. The text moves from a series of narrative starts and stops that are complicated by the character's desire to forget her past. In a sense, readers are at the mercy of the character's desire to remember or forget in order to trace all the intricacies of the story. Yet, at the same time, the protagonist herself is also at the mercy of a manipulative narrator who selects what to tell and how.

The above statement made by the character is not only a clear example of stream of consciousness but also of the way the main character seems to feel about herself the whole time. Even now that she is an adult she feels uncertain about herself and her identity. Throughout the whole story, one gets the impression that this female character has gone through a great change especially in regards to her physical appearance and her position. However, she still does not seem to be very secure about her individual situation. Her identity appears to be still fragmented and incomplete. This is the reason

why there are particular circumstances in her past that still haunt her, especially those that had marked her in a negative manner: for example, the abandonment by her mother, the fact that she is almost kidnapped to replace a dead girl, the death of her grandmother, the day her friends Mrs Baker and Velma Jackson left her, etc.

When reading the story, one has the impression that everything is told by a narrator, but through the character's eyes. The reader gets the information required in each moment of the narrative when the main character gets it through the detailed descriptions provided. An example of this is how readers find out about the grandmother's death:

> What happened, happened quickly. The radio announced a contest. She told Mrs Baker about it. Mrs Baker convinces her to send her picture in to the contest: 'Do you really want to spend the rest of your days here? Especially now that your grandmother's passed on?' Her heart stopped. Just like that (Senior 1995: 100).

Both the idea of sending her picture to a contest and her grandmother's death are new for the reader. What the character feels after hearing it in Mrs Baker's voice appears to be a reflection of the reader's surprise when they have also read about the grandmother's death. They are accompanying the girl in her pain and sense of loss: both because of the loss of her beloved grandmother and about the uncertainty she has about her future without her protection.

By giving information little by little, the narrator is prompting the reader to re-write the story at the same time the main character is writing it, but merely as s/he chooses. Both the author and the narrator make a selection of the things to be told. The whole history of the character is not relayed; only those parts that the narrator has chosen as relevant. Memory tends to be quite selective and it usually remembers only what the person who is remembering desires or fear. In this case, the character's trauma

as a child and how she develops into an apparently different woman are emphasised; yet, maybe she is not as different as she thinks. In her memories she is still running into the arms of her grandmother:

> There is a woman lying in bed. She has flown through a storm to the feet of her grandmother, who is seated atilt at the upright, on a bench which holds browned sheets of music. The girl's hair is glistening from the wet but not a strand is out of place (Senior 1995: 93).

The woman in the hospital bed is imaginarily running to hide herself in her grandmother's embrace. She feels unprotected, alone and vulnerable. She remembers the feeling she had at that time when after running under the rain escaping from the White couple's house, she reached her grandmother's home. This is likely to comfort her and make her feel better. She is trying to go back to that moment so as to revive this incredible feeling of relief, of protection, of safeness and even of happiness. Morrison maintains that sharing this repressed information helps with healing (Plasa 2000: 33). The idea of using memory as a means of healing is ironically done at hospital. The healing process is at work both physically and psychologically. The protagonist's body is projecting the pain she has inside.

The insertion of the narrator within the text and the fictional space of the characters, along with the fact that the narration is not following a linear pattern, create a feeling of confusion. The self-reflexive disposition of metafiction acts by creating a dialogue between reader and narrator/writer, and between reader and text. Cliff clearly trespasses on the margins of the narration, providing the reader with bits of information here and there that have to be pieced together in order to fully find the direction of the text and be able to interpret it. At one point, the narrator even addresses readers directly, making them accomplices in the story:

> *Daughter of the Mother Lode.* The reader might recall that one. It's on late night TV and also on video now. She was the half-breed daughter of a Forty-Niner. At first, dirty and monosyllabic, then taken up by a kindly rancher's wife, only to be kidnapped by some crazy Apaches (Cliff 1990: 102).

Here the narrator is directly addressing the readers by encouraging them to remember a TV series that was shown in the past. The narrator tells us about its plot: the life of a poor woman on the screen; the form of presenting the life of the character reminds readers a lot of a screen, of a TV series that takes place in front of their eyes. Memory here is acquiring a different dimension. There is the fictional world of the woman who almost ascends to sainthood on the TV screen, the dimension of the woman who is in the bed watching it (and probably appearing on it as an actress), and the readers who from a distance are able to see everything. The story is told as if readers were encouraged to watch everything from above, unable to control their vantage point as the plot develops; sometimes they have the impression that they are inside the story and sometimes outside of it. It is as if an imaginary camera were directing their attention towards something, neglecting the rest of the story at times, and getting a panoramic perspective at others.

From the voice of the narrator, readers clearly get into the character's mind. The narrator is the one who thinks and recognises the images in her own mind and interprets the message they transmit. The interpretation is hers and represents the new feelings she is having while she is remembering her past. The narrator goes from providing us with a mere description of the place to the character's feelings in many cases:

> She imagined a deep and enduring blackness. Salt stripping him to bone, coral grafting, encrusted with other sea-creatures. She thought suddenly it was the wrong ocean that had claimed him- his company was at the bottom of the other.
>
> 'Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell:
>
> Ding-dong.
>
> Hark! Now I hear them- Ding-dong bell'

> She heard nothing. The silence would be as deep and enduring as blackness (Cliff 1990: 98).

This passage references the death of Mr Baker when his ship sunk in the Pacific and he was lost. She imagines how it should be to be devoured by the ocean. She imagines there must be infinite blackness. She thinks that the greatness of the ocean may have provoked a sense of loss and that the silence would be as enduring as total darkness. The ocean is described as a tomb: full of silence and darkness with a body reduced to bones (Cliff 1990: 98). In her words, there is a hint at the character's fear of death. Death must be like feeling lost and empty; her future is also uncertain and the ghosts of a past life are still haunting her; thus, death and future are compared, as both are dark and deeply enduring.

At this stage the reader emerges as an active re-writer at the mercy of a manipulative agent, who in this case is Cliff performing the role of the narrator. Even worse, she is performing the role of a narrator who knows the story through the eyes of the woman in bed. Therefore, the reliability of this narrator is not clear. On the one hand, the protagonist sees reality in her own way, and therefore she is perfectly reliable; on the other hand, reality is seen through old memories of childhood and the subsequent gap it provokes. This can be seen in the lack of chronology of the text as well as in the mixture of an omniscient narrator's voice with free indirect and direct styles. At the beginning of the story, the main character is full of fear and doubts. While she is exploring her own mind, she begins to extract all those things in her past that made her feel uneasy, both with what she sees and with her own feelings towards herself: 'Where does she begin and the tomboy end?' (Cliff 1990: 90). By thinking this, the woman is questioning herself about her own development process. Is there something of the tomboy still in her? It is clear that there is something of that tomboy still in her; maybe not in her physical appearance, but rather in her identity construction. Apparently, she is

not that girl who looked like a boy anymore; yet, her memory brings her back to that time, to the time in which her life was different. Her traumatic past still torments her. Readers have the feeling that until the female character is not able to cope with her own past, with her own history; she will not be able to carry on.

At a certain point in the story, the main character talks about escaping and seeing what is beyond her town. The first time she has this feeling is when she asks her grandmother for permission to get a radio:

> 'Grandma, if I work for her, may I get a radio?'
> 'Tell me, why do you want this infernal thing?'
> 'Teacher says it's educational.' Escape. I want to know about the outside (Cliff 1990: 96).

She wants the radio to know about the world; so that it may serve as a window to the outside. She dreams of starting anew as someone different; she desires to stop being who she is in order to transform herself into someone special. She feels inferior to her classmates. She is neither purely Black nor purely White and she does not look as girlish and pretty as the other girls:

> The rope keeps up its slapping, the voices speed their chanting. As the chant speeds up, so does the rope. The tomboy rushes in, challenging the others to trip her, burn her legs where she has rolled her jeans. Excitement is at a pitch. Franklin! Ladies! Eleanor! Babies! The tomboy's feet pound the ground. They are out for her. A voice signs out, above the others, and a word, strange and harsh to the observer's ears, sounds over the pound of feet, over the slap of rope. Bulldagger! Bulldagger! Bulldagger! Bulldagger! The rope sings pasts the tomboy's ears. She feels its heat against her skin. She knows the word. Salt burns the corners of her eyes (Cliff 1990: 90).

Once her grandmother is dead, and with the encouragement of Mrs Baker, she finally decides to move on. Yet, this change does not occur in a natural way, as a desire to move forward, but rather as an escape; she tries to escape from her past life the same way she did when she was in the dead girl's bed in a strange home.

The rope marking time frames the scene: the slaps on the girl's legs and the way the other girls laugh at her. She feels humiliated and unaccepted. She feels the heat of fury. She is definitely not like the rest; she is the "other". As an adult she has not yet been able to cope with this otherness. There are certain events in her past life that have stigmatised her as someone different from the others: she lives with her Black grandmother even though she is White, her mother has abandoned her leaving a deep emptiness and she has to escape several times in order to be free, or at least to try to develop her free will. In a sense, what the protagonist of the story is doing at a different level is incorporating instances of her past life into her "present" existence in order to solve her own contradictory representations. Memory is converted into a crucial factor for the development of the plot in this narrative. The burden of the past and its remembrance create a chaotic sense of loss that is represented structurally in the lack of linearity of the narrative, which is constructed as a series of fragments that mix present and past events. These circumstances generate fragmentation at two different levels; those of time and those of authorial voice.

In the case of Senior's "Discerner of Hearts", the insertion of the narrator into the text, and the fictional space of the characters along with the fact that contrarily to fairy tales, the narration is not following a linear pattern, creates a feeling of confusion. Instances such as the following demonstrate this issue:

> But as if the person didn't care, the painted letters were jauntily decorated which swirls and squiggles and dots. She thought she recognized the drawing of a key, and, as far as she could make out, for it took her a long time to read it, the writing below it said, or was trying to say: "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Senior 1995: 22).

From the voice of the narrator, readers clearly get into Theresa's mind. She thinks and recognises the drawing and interprets the transmitted message. The interpretation is hers and represents the new feelings she is having once she has entered Mr Burnham's yard.

The narrator goes from providing us with a mere description of the place, to Theresa's feelings; from the decoration of the door to what all those drawings may represent and tell us.

In this case she is performing the role of a narrator who sees the story through the eyes of a girl, therefore, the reliability of this narrator is not clear. On the one hand, Theresa sees reality in her own manner, and therefore she is perfectly reliable; on the other hand, reality is seen through old memories of childhood and the subsequent gap it provokes. This can be seen in the lack of chronology of the text as well as in the mixture of an omniscient narrator's voice with free indirect and direct styles. It starts almost at the end when Theresa at last dares to cross the road and go into Mr Burnham's yard. At the beginning of the story during her first attempt, she is full of fears and doubts. While she is exploring Mr Burnham's place she begins to feel more comfortable, both with what she sees and with her own feelings towards herself.

Another important aspect of fairy tales, Opie lists, is that they are regarded as popular romances, which accomplish the enactment of dreams or wishes that are fulfilled when diverse tasks are faced and order is re-established (Opie 1980: 15). In this story, dreams and wishes are greatly emphasised, for example, Cissy dreams of becoming a mother. Her life has no meaning without the bearing of her own child. She is tired of taking care of other people's babies. To be a mother is something her cultural background expects from her. She can be either a mother or a "mule", fertile or frigid, like the rest of the girls in her community, or like the Whites' daughters, who wait until they are older to have their babies. She can either fulfil the expectations of Blacks, and have her baby to demonstrate to them that she is a real woman, or she can appease to the Whites' Christian morals and wait until she is married and settled. As she explains: "I am nothing but a mule. Everywhere I go, I know them calling me mule…what good is a

woman if she can't have pickney?" (Senior 1995: 13). There are several instances in literature by Black writers in which female characters are described as mules. In Afro-American author Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), a female character named Nanny states that the Black woman is "the mule of the world" which is the genesis of the novel. At certain points in the novel, Janie, the main character, is even compared to a mule. This first occurs when her husband, Logan, tells her he will go to Lake City to buy a mule. Logan wants Janie to use the mule to plough potatoes. Janie refuses and Logan tells her that her place is where he tells her to be. For Logan, both the mule and Janie are there to work hard for him at the same level. The second instance occurs when Janie marries Joe Starks. Janie gets angry with the porchsitters baiting a mule. She identifies with the mule's struggle. Later in the novel, Joe Starks will bait Janie like he would have done with the mule: "people ought to have some regard for helpless things?. She wanted to fight about it" (Hurston 1986: 90).

Cissy's ideas about having a baby and the fact that she is expected to have one within her community contrasts greatly with the idea Theresa's mother has about the same subject: "Well, Miss, see what happens when you're careless? I hope you'll learn the lesson" (Senior 1995: 15). Motherhood for the Blacks is a way of perpetuating the oppression and preventing women from being human as opposed to "mules". For Whites, it is the same, but social conventions make them consider it in a different manner. For Cissy, it is a means of becoming totally accepted among those of her community, but also the only apparent way of becoming a complete being and defining herself. One of her duties as a woman is to procreate; and it is also a way of having something of her own. She takes care of other people's children and she thinks it is time to take care of her own. There is a bond between mother and child, which makes them become almost as one. She wants to experience this link and become a 'complete

woman' in accordance with the sentiment of her community. She lacks something and believes that after having a baby she will finally develop both as a woman and as a free individual.

The main character, Theresa, also has big dreams and wishes. She would like to be beautiful just as much as her sisters; she wants to be the princess in fairy tale, but alas, she is only the beast. The only one who does not lie to her in this respect to make her feel comfortable is Cissy: "Well is true you not pretty like them other one there, but when you turn a big woman you can fix yuself up" (Senior 1995: 11). Theresa always bears Cissy's truths because she is her favourite and she is always encouraging her in one way or another. Her own mother does not even make Theresa feel special or at ease. This makes her feel insecure and obviously more connected to Cissy than to her own mother. Maybe Theresa is the child Cissy wants so much to call her own. She knows her mother is always boasting about her sisters and not about her. All the characters in the story are not only described physically, characteristics of their personalities are also accurately provided. The second section of the story starts with a detailed description of Theresa and her sisters.

> Of the three of them, Theresa, the middle one, was the only one Cissy would say a lot more to, when they were alone, because she liked Theresa the best. Theresa didn't get uppity and proud and facety sometimes like Jane, the eldest, Cissy often told her friends, and she wasn't spoilt and whining and tattletale like the little one, Maud. Plus, you could say Theresa has been born into Cissy's hands, for Cissy's mother had sent her to works for the Randolphs the month before Theresa was born. Cissy was only fourteen then, and she loved the baby passionately, treated her as if she was her own (Senior 1995: 7).

Both Cissy and Theresa are linked since the latter was born and the girl sees in Cissy a mother figure. In fact, she usually pays more attention to Cissy than to her own mother. Even though her sisters are more beautiful and have better qualities in the eyes of the rest of the world, Cissy finds Theresa more special than anybody else. She is the only

person allowed to enter her quarters freely. At the beginning of the story, when the girl exposes the reason not to cross the road, she mentions her mother's words only vaguely and centres herself on Cissy's:

> They could get killed, Mama said, everyone drove so fast. Because of the Blackartman who drove up and down in a car and snatched children. That's why, Cissy said, you must never get into a car with a strange man, no matter how heavily it's raining or anything. Because you can never tell just by looking whether or not he is the Blackartman (Senior 1995: 1).

Her mother's words are mentioned in contrast to Cissy's, and serve the girl to introduce the whole story about the Blackartman. Later in the story, Theresa compares Cissy and her mother again:

> Because they liked being around Cissy, liked hearing her talk about her life, all the things she knew which were different from the things Mama knew, they never pressed her about the Blackartman (Senior 1995: 2).

Everything Cissy talks about is different from the stories her mother tells her. She values Cissy's views more than her mother's. She realises that she is closer to Cissy than to her own mother. She understands Cissy's life better than her family's.

In fact, Theresa represents the link between the two worlds contained in the story: the world of the rich Whites and that of the Black servants. These two worlds are very well represented in the way Cissy's pregnancy, and later her depression, are understood, in the manner they express their beliefs, in their morals, in their language… Theresa, by freely entering Cissy's room and by freely moving as well in the different situations around her family, embodies the dual worlds within which she lives. Yet, she feels more comfortable in the one she is not being raised in, the one with Cissy. This is the reason why she cannot understand certain things Cissy does. She totally enters in the world of Blacks by discovering all their secrets in Mr Burnham's yard: the bushes, herbs, baths, rituals, flags…everything she had heard about at last proving to be true.

Mr Burnham's yard is the representation of otherness in the story. She feels the other, the differences among her and her sisters and her mother treats her this way; this is why she finally enters into the yard; to embrace this otherness and to try to finally find herself. It is paradoxical how it seems that once she crosses the lines fully, she is ready to come back to her position and therefore to her world. She enters Mr Burnham's yard to listen in his voice to all her fears, insecurities and wishes. Mr Burnham tells her the truth: "you are going to grow up to be a fine lady, for you have a big, big heart" (Senior 1995: 25). Now she is ready to come back home and prepare for the life she is expected to lead: "Mr Burnham held her hand and walked across the road, and at the short cut of her yard, he wished her good day" (Senior 1995: 25). She appears to be in the process of crossing the boundary between childhood and adulthood. On her way to maturity she has to overcome certain tasks that make her feel more comfortable and secure with her own self-defining process. She feels "the other". She does not identify neither with her family nor with Cissy, in many respects. This story decentres the centre. Senior takes a White girl from the upper class and transforms her into 'the other'. Her closeness to Cissy makes her feel closer to a community and a life to which she does not belong. She does not feel like her sisters or mother. She does not see herself reflected in them. Theresa is situated on the border, not only between childhood and adulthood, but also between two different worlds that co-exist together without finally mixing with each other. This can be perfectly seen with the comparison between Doctor Carter and Mr Burnham, as Cissy explains to her that people go to Mr Burnham every time they feel sick. When Theresa asks her why they do not go to Dr Carter, Cissy replies, "There is sick, and again there is sick" (Senior 1995: 3).

The fact that fairy tales are concerned with situations rather than with characters, which are always archetypical, can pose as another considerable ingredient of the genre

(Opie 1980: 18). Tatar (1999: 7) indicates that this is the reason why characters in tales do not frequently have a name or a background story. Senior gives every character in her story a past and a clear personality, without reducing them to mere actions. It is important to elaborate on how Senior has constructed her characters on the basis of subjectivity and gender stereotypes, distorting the archetypical building pattern found in most fairy tales. Theresa, the protagonist and the heroine of the story, is represented as an anti-heroine. She is not beautiful, at least not like her sisters. She is shy and insecure. Her mind is full of fears and doubts. She crosses the road with the terrible fear of the Blackartman out of love. She wants to thank Cissy for being her only friend and the only one who truly respects her as she is. Yet, a sense of loss is also embedded in her decision to cross the road: she is frightened to lose Cissy. She is not yet confident enough to be alone. In a sense she is guarantying herself her own comfort and safety. Mr Burnham is also described as the anti-hero. He is a healer, "a doctor", a wise man, someone who can "read you", a spiritual guide, a discerner of hearts, an obeah destroyer, but in appearance he is nothing more than a small Black man with a funny voice and a strange house.

An additional notorious feature of fairy tales, which also appears in this story, is that every single one of them conveys a lesson on morality. In a sense, morals contained in fairy tales have a didactic purpose. They try to show children how if one deviates from the correct path they may suffer consequences. This is what Theresa's mother tries to explain to Cissy when she discovers she is pregnant with Fonso's child. This story also has a moral, but a different one from the ones typical in fairy tales. Cissy chooses the man who will allow her to have her baby, although Fonso is Ermine's husband. Cissy knows other girls got pregnant with him. Her magic, the magic Mr Burnham has prepared for her, is aimed at obtaining his favours. Finally, she gets pregnant, but the

words of Mr Burnham make her think. He told her to choose someone different, but she does not pay any attention. Later she thinks Ermine has put obeah over her and that she has lost her baby. When the doctor visits her, he confirms that both the baby and Cissy are perfectly well. Her guilt is punishing her to the point that she thinks that she has lost what she loves the most, her unborn child. There is no obeah, there is only guilt. She feels guilty and miserable because Fonso has a wife and three children. She also feels guilty because she does not really love him. She has just used him to fulfil her own desires. Does obeah really exist? It is just the projection of our fears and wishes?

The heroine's ordeal in this story is portrayed as a necessary step into discovering herself and the reality around her. Theresa has to cross the road mainly to overcome two things: first, she has to face her childish fears: the Blackartman, obeah and her own appearance. Secondly, she has to overcome this initiatory ritual to discover her position in life, to mature as a woman and start creating her own subjectivity; for she is not Cissy, she is Theresa. The fact that she decided to enter Mr Burnham's yard can be interpreted as the progression of a woman in progress. Theresa is trying to identify her role in the events she is living. There are two subtexts in tension in Senior's story. Those are the sphere of her family, the comfort, easiness and fairy-tale-like life they may provide her; and the girl inserting herself in a world she does not belong to just to be able to live the life of others. This is the first time she decides something by herself. She crosses the threshold to free will. She is now capable of freely deciding what to do. Senior's heroine remains neither passive nor voiceless. The initiatory ritual she performed entering Mr Burnham's yard provided her with a voice because she has been able to escape the traditional role set out for her by society in order to help Cissy free herself from obeah; but it has also served her to discover Mr Burnham's work is actually "to discern hearts". In other words, to help people purify themselves and

develop as genuine and free individuals. He helps people, by removing their shackles and their sufferings, for that is the definition of obeah.

Finally, Theresa defies the script written for her by her community and gets closer to her beloved Cissy by crossing the road in what seems to be a necessary step towards recovering the person she most admires. Though it may appear to be, Cissy's health is actually not the only reason for carrying out this task. Theresa is not only crossing a road, but also hundreds of different barriers that are not allowing her to develop as a free individual. She crosses the boundary to adulthood at the same time she is crossing that of racial and class distinction. Theresa is also breaking an important barrier that will enable her to self-determine for the first time. Senior confers the narrative control to the girl from the very beginning. The female impersonation in the narrative voice operates as a literary device to dislocate the conceived ideas about paternity and authority of the texts (Warner 1995: 194). Senior is returning to the repressed, to "otherness". Gilbert and Gubar, in *The Mad Woman in the Attic*, claim that if pen equals penis, women are excluded from literary creativity (Showalter 1986: 250). In her analysis of Dinesen's story, *"The Blank Page"*, Gubar gives us an account on women's complications in telling their stories. In this story, Senior engages the idea Gubar explores in her essay, of women as blank pages where patriarchal dominance attempts to inscribe their stories for them, using the blood of their loss of virginity as the ink (Gubar in Showalter 1986: 300-301).

At the beginning of the story, Theresa was simply afraid of moving forward having lost her major support, Cissy; she feels unable to arrange her own life outside the patriarchal constraints imposed upon her. By going into her neighbour's yard and sanctuary, she is no longer following the plot arranged for her by her family and community, who truly desire to control her life and story. It is at this very moment when

she realises she can author her own story, and then live it. Mr Burnham serves her as an ally and confidante. At the end of the story she is a blank page no more. She has finally embraced her own freedom and is in the process of developing herself as an independent individual.

Apropos to the temporal fragmentation in Cliff's story, the text imparts a constant sense of movement from the fictional present to the past and vice versa. The key to this narrative is the occluded text, which is buried beneath the surface narrative. The texts constantly move from one dimension of reference into another. This way, the author achieves a literary destabilising effect, and such destabilization is central to the development of the story. The female impersonation in the narrative voice operates as a literary device to dislocate the conceived ideas about paternity and authority of texts. The process of recasting the past by the use of memory endures as one of the most outstanding elements in the story.

Throughout the development of the stories there is a sense that the female protagonist would not be able to construct her subjectivity until she manages to come to terms with her dramatic past. There is no opportunity either to construct a present or to change and improve the future if they do not remember and confront the events that prevent them from progressing. The texts deal with the contradiction implied in living with terrifying memories, the need to remember and tell, despite the harm it provokes, and the subsequent desire to forget. The burden of the past and its remembrance create a chaotic sensation of loss that is represented structurally in the lack of linearity of the narratives, which are constructed as a series of fragments that mix present and past events. The two stories take on the form of a "fabric" rather than proceeding sequentially, as we have seen previously in Chapter Two, according to Barthes "text" comes from fabric. The various episodes occurring in this fabric are woven together

without any kind of chronological order or single authorial voice. These circumstances generate fragmentation at two different levels, those of time and those of authorial voice. Regarding the latter, in the two works the reader is presented with a series of different narratives and sections, each of them told from a specific perspective.

An awareness of one's past is the first step toward understanding one's self. As the story develops, the main character feels the need to move on, to escape again. By sending her picture to the contest, Theresa tries to obtain two important things: the recognition of the rest as someone beautiful, and her need to start anew as someone different, somewhere different. The death of her grandmother is a crucial factor for her to decide to leave and begin a new life. The encouragement of Mrs Baker is also substantial. The girl finds in Mrs Baker the support needed. She shows the girl new things and the way to finally create her own independent self. When her husband dies, Mrs Baker starts a friendship with Velma Jackson. This friendship ends up as everything else, and Jack, as Velma wants to be called, and Mrs Baker move to Philadelphia in order to feel free to love each other:

> 'Will you come with me?
> 'No
> 'Why not?
> I' can't
> 'Why not? Jack and I have made plans. She has some friends in Philadelphia. It will 'be easier for us there.
> 'And Elijah?
> 'Oh, we'll take him along, of course. Good schools there.
> 'I'm going to miss you
> 'You'll be fine. We'll keep in touch. This town isn't the world you know.
> 'No. (Cliff 1990: 101).

She finds herself alone in a world she does not belong to. Now that Mrs Baker is also leaving, there is nothing that links her to her town. The girl feels deceived again. Once more she is to be alone and abandoned. All the women she has had emotional

connections with have gone away; her mother, her grandmother and Mrs Baker. The girl feels something special for Mrs Baker:

> The radio paid for, her visits to Mrs Baker are meant to stop- that was the agreement. But she will not quit. Her visits to Mrs Baker- like her hiding under her mother's covers with the radio late at night, terrified the hot tubes will catch the bed afire- are surreptitious, and fill her with a warmth she is sure is wrong. She loves this woman, who is soft, who drops the lace front of her camisole to feed her baby, who tunes in to the opera from New York on Saturday afternoons and explains each heated plot as she moves around the small neat house.
> The girl sees the woman in her dreams (Cliff 1990: 99).

The girl has agreed to stop her visits to Mrs Baker but her passion towards her does not allow her to do it. Her feelings towards this sweet woman are complicated. The woman is always on her mind, and makes her feel comfortable and special. Yet, next to her she feels the same way she does under to her mother's covers; the only thing she keeps from her. Is the girl trying to replace the absent mother figure with Mrs Baker? Or, is she feeling something passionate and sexual towards her? Mrs Baker and the girl's mother are compared at a certain moment in the story. When the girl tells her grandmother that Mrs Baker is going to quit teaching to take care of her baby, the woman blames her for being weak and leaving her job after having studied and prepared herself so much:

> 'I say what a foolish woman. To go through all that- all that she must have done, and her people too- to get a college education and become a teacher and then throw it all away to become another breeder. What a shame…Running off like that' (Cliff 1990: 95-96).

After this passage, the voice of the protagonist emerges again as a first person narrator, to defend the decision taken by Mrs Baker. She feels she has not left her pupils unattended; she has chosen her baby. Contrarily, Theresa's mother did not choose her. She ran away from her, from her daughter:

> No, grandmother. Your daughter, my mother, ran off, or away. My mother who quit Spelman after one year because she didn't like the smell of her own hair burning- so you said. Am I to believe you? Went north and came back with me, and then ran off, away- again (Cliff 1990: 96).

She blames both her grandmother and her mother for having deceived her. Her grandmother does not tell her the truth so as not to hurt her and the enigma of an unknown mother, so as not to leave a great emptiness inside her. She does not know her; the only thing she knows is that her mother did not want her. The baby was probably a burden for her in her new life; yet, the reader does not get to know the truth about that. This is further proof of the way the narrator works out the plot. As the story is told through the voice of the protagonist, it is not possible for readers to infer the true circumstances of her mother's abandoning her because the character herself does not know them.

The same way her relationship with Mrs Baker brings with it a particular complication, the relationship with her mother emerges as one of the most significant and traumatic experience in her life. As a child she cannot understand why her mother left her. The mother is a constant memory in the mind of both the protagonist and her grandmother; the two women are directly linked to her and her absence makes them feel a certain unease: As wild as the girl's mother, whom the girl cannot remember, and the grandmother cannot forget (Cliff 1990: 91). The mother is present the whole time but there are different approaches to her figure. Whereas the grandmother has a clear visual image of her daughter, Theresa only remembers her as an absent figure without having had a relationship with her off of which to base her image. The girl's trauma is derived from the very absence of a mother she cannot remember or situate in her mind. The rest of her memories are mainly visual rather than verbal; this does not happen when she remembers her mother. She remembers the mixed feelings provoked by her absence instead of her presence: the way she looked, her eyes, the way she moved, etc. As a consequence, to remember her is a source of more confusion trying to figure out all these details about her. The girl cannot describe her own mother. She has not got a

perception or a clear mental picture of her; without a mental image of something or someone, it is impossible to verbalise aspects of it. The only idea she keeps in mind about her mother is abstract and linked to the feeling of having being left behind.

Remembering is also performed in this case as a purging process in order to re-affirm oneself as a victim of the situation rather than as the one who provoked it. Almost all Theresa's memories are devoted to her mother and her absence. In her thoughts she demands that Mrs Baker replace her mother: apart from her grandmother, Mrs Baker is the only hint of a mother figure and of real affection she has had in her childhood. Mrs Baker is not something abstract and confused in her mind. She is tangible. She appears in her dreams fully represented. Mrs Baker provides her with the image she lacks; she embodies the mother figure that the girl has always desired. She fills the void left by her absent biological mother.

Memory, or as Toni Morrison calls it, r*ememory,* is converted into a crucial factor for the development of the plot in these type of narratives, as we said above. According to Morrison, there is no gap between past and future because they are "bridged for us by memory" (Plasa 2000:33). Feminist German writer and critic Christa Wolf talks about *Vergangenheitsbewaltigung*, or the process of getting over the past (www.geocities.com/Broadway/1928/myth.htm). As a result of the dramatic experiences suffered by the characters in the past, the present is formed by a series of memories which do not let them progress neither as individual subjects nor as members of any community. All of them are haunted by their pasts and dehumanised by what they have done or what has been done to them. Yet, there is a need in all the novels to remember in order to be healed. The characters need to recast their memories in order to be able to move on. As Bowers puts it, "remembering is part of reversing the "dirtying" process that robbed slaves of self-esteem" (Bowers in Andrews et al. 1999: 214).

In this story, memory works as a means of coping with the past so as to produce a fruitful future. By recasting the past, Theresa's seclusion and the roles ascribed to her in preceding times can be revisited. She needs someone with whom she can share the information so as to be healed from the anxiety these memories cause her. There is a sensation that verbalising her memories is a means of proving they had happened. Until she does not carry out the act of remembering, she will not be able to face and get through the weight on her heart. The main character has to confront her trauma in order to cure the anxiety these memories unconsciously provoke. Memory works as a healer. Remembrance becomes a decisive requirement in curing the unease produced by the lack of control the girl has over her life. It is essential to remember so as to be able to adjust her role in her own life. The main character needs to write her own story in order to control her fate. The incorporation of events from the main character's past serves as the intertext where Cliff portrays racial and gender issues and is capable of dealing with the colonial past of her country. Cliff, as the author of the story, needs to write about her memories of Jamaica and does it by remembering the oppressive and frustrating past, as it is present both in her life and the lives of her characters.

The texts constantly move from one plane of reference into another. This way, the authors achieve a literary destabilising effect. The destabilization is central to the development of the novels. They present us with alternative versions of a story generally narrated from the White male perspective. Both novels turn their primary attention to otherness, the story told by Black women. This decentralization helps the three authors deconstruct the major negative roles attributed to the archetype embedded in the traditional history, by providing their readers with the version of the "other". They tell the story that has seldom been told in patriarchal Western accounts. Similarly, Cliff and Senior transfer the narrative control to their main female characters that are

marked by racial difference. The female impersonation in the narrative voice operates as a literary device to dislocate the conceived ideas about paternity and authority of texts. The process of recasting the past by the use of memory persists as one of the most outstanding elements in the three novels. An awareness of one's history is the first step toward understanding one's self. Yet no one who travels back to the traumatic past can remain intact, both physically and mentally: physically, with the presence of the wounds on their bodies, and mentally, with the constant presence of terrifying memories.

At the end of Cliff's story, the protagonist goes from being totally alienated and confused to possessing great certainty about her future, to and to feeling great relief in regards to her situation; which may mark the beginning of change. Now that she has dealt with the ghosts of her past, she may be capable of taking action in her own future. First, she tries to find Mrs Baker in Philadelphia; second, she wonders what will be of her; and finally, in a plane crossing through a storm, she feels relieved:

> Below the plane is a storm, a burst behind a cloud, streak lightning splits the sky, she rests her head against the window; she finds the cold comforting (Cliff 1990: 104).

Readers are not told where Theresa is going, the story is left open-ended. The reader may interpret that she is going to visit Mrs Baker in Philadelphia; or that she has finally left her past behind and is moving on to a new life with the plane symbolising the transition from one into the other. What is certain is that from the "heat" she was feeling on other occasions, she now let herself be comforted by the cold window on the plane. This may be a sign of her moving forward. The storm that before provoked turmoil in her, now calms her. Moreover, this may represent that she is not escaping from anything anymore, but rather facing the future in a more certain and positive way. Memory may have played its part and helped her in overcoming her past so as to lead the way to a positive future.

To summarize, the current chapter has dealt with intertextuality as a type of memory. The similarities are obvious if one keeps in mind that both memory and intertextuality are means of recasting the past. In the two stories at which this analysis is directed, memory plays an important role; first, in the construction of the stories of the different characters, and secondly in the attempt by these characters to construct an identity as individuals and as members of a specific community. Memory becomes crucial for the female protagonists in the building up of their stories. It also becomes central in the form of intertextuality for women writers in their endeavour to establish themselves as legitimate creators capable of authorising their narratives. The recasting of the past through memory symbolises their endeavours to revise a long-standing canonical discourse, which serves them in their desire to provoke a change in the ideals and conceptions towards Black women implanted in their society. Both texts present a need to remember so as to be healed of the wounds caused by a traumatic past. For the authors, intertextuality is the healer, the solution to avoid the conventional and patriarchal images of womanhood and Blackness embedded in canonical traditional texts such as the texts colonialism has traditionally attempted to write. The last item explored in this section is the way these writers employ an individual experience of a certain character in order to tackle historical issues of a collective dimension in a political light. Both stories can be interpreted as cultural translations of very recent historical periods.

Chapter Four: Collecting Historical Events: Historiographic Metafiction at Work in Senior's "The Chocho Vine" and Cliff's "A Woman who Plays the Trumpet is Deported".

> A woman. A black woman. A black woman musician. A black woman musician who plays the trumpet. A bitch who blows. A lady trumpet-player. A woman with chops (Cliff 1990: 55).

The quotation above corresponds to the description Michelle Cliff provides of the main character of her short story. At the beginning, she clearly states that the story is based upon and dedicated to Valaida Snow, a Black trumpet player who escaped from a Nazi concentration camp and died of a cerebral haemorrhage years later, unable to overcome the terrible state in which she survived this horrifying experience. The author puts herself in the mind of this real person clearly stating that this story was "inspired by her story, but it is an imagining" (Cliff 1990: 55). Intertextuality is at work from the very beginning. Is there a need to say that everything is fiction? Is there a need to recast a particular historical character and a certain historical event so as to validate the author's version? Is the author trying to blur out the distinctions between reality and fiction?

The trumpeter Valaida Snow, was born in Tennessee. She was a Black woman musician. When she was fifteen years old, she had already learnt how to play cello, bass, banjo, violin, mandolin, harp, accordion, clarinet, trumpet and saxophone, all at professional levels. She also sang and danced. She became quite popular playing the trumpet, and was even nicknamed "Little Louis" after Louis Armstrong. Louis Armstrong said she was the second best trumpet player, him being the best. She toured the USA, Europe and China playing the trumpet. From 1926 to 1929 she joined Jack Carter's band, *Serenades* and played in Asia. During the 1930s she became popular in jazz clubs in Paris and London and recorded her hit song "High Hat, Trumpet and Rhythm". She also made films with her husband, Ananias Berry, of the Berry Brothers dancing troupe. After playing New York's Apollo Theatre, she came back to Europe and

the Far East for more shows and films. While touring through Denmark in 1941, she was arrested by the Nazis and kept at a Danish prison in Copenhagen, which was run by the Nazis, before being released on a prisoner exchange in May 1942. She later married Earl Edwards. In the 1950s, she was unable to regain her former success. Valaida Snow died of a brain haemorrhage on May 30, 1956, in New York City, during a performance at the Palace Theatre (Miller, 2007).

This short story contains several frameworks that collude in the textual development of the story; the references to the historical period in which it took place, the real story of Valaida Snow, who was immersed in a situation that had nothing to do with her, and the story of the main character Cliff has created inspired by her. In the fictional story by Cliff, a Black woman trumpet player decides to escape to Paris in an attempt to liberate herself from the great pressure Blacks were under in the USA, and the difficulties of the reconstruction period. She goes to Europe convinced that nobody is going to look at her differently because of her race. There she finds a job as a musician at a club in Paris, where thinks she is going to develop herself as an individual and finally be able to live the life she had always wanted. Yet, the Second World War is about to start and she has to flee to Denmark. There, she finds herself stuck within all the political turmoil and under the rule of the Nazi government. She gets sent to a concentration camp with Jews and other non-Whites. Her attempt to liberate herself proves disastrous, and she finds herself in a situation and a war that has nothing to do with her. Isolation and confinement are the consequences she has to deal with in her attempt to write her own story and be an independent being. The other two frameworks of the story stated above will develop in a parallel fashion towards the end of this one. Before providing a detailed analysis of other aspects of the fictional story created by

Cliff, historiographic metafiction and the way it has been employed in this story as well as in Senior's story will be discussed.

In the current chapter, the concept of historiographic metafiction as a specific type of intertextuality will be defined, which employs historical intertexts. For this purpose, the works of the following scholars will mainly be employed; Linda Hutcheon, Patricia Waugh and Brian McHale, who all deal with historiographic metafiction within the context of parodic intertextuality. It is also important to elaborate on how this specific form of intertextuality refers to historical events and has been used by contemporary writers who belong to minority groups in order to provide a different view of history. The principal concerns regarding the theory of historiographic metafiction as a strategy to question historical pasts will also be explored. Patricia Waugh describes metafiction in general as a term given to fictional writing which "self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about fiction and reality" (Waugh 1984: 1). When metafiction is applied to history, many different interpretations are possible. In one of her most remarkable works, *The Politics of Postmodernism*, Linda Hutcheon noted that in our post-modern age, literature involves a radical questioning of the available modes of representation, and thus the available modes of knowledge within culture (Hutcheon 1989: 3-4). Hutcheon often focuses her study of metafiction on contemporary novels dealing with historical subjects. Considering the works of scholars such as LaCapra, Foucault or Brian McHale, Hutcheon suggests that the idea of a totalised sense of history has been de-constructed. Due to the fact that history has been constructed as a series of interpretations of particular factual events, she outlines that there are significant parallels between the processes of history-writing and story-writing (Hutcheon 1989: 53). For her, post-modern fiction is paramount and thus contests the conventionality and

unacknowledged ideology of the assumption of a unique history/fiction implied in realist narrative. It challenges readers to question the processes by which we represent our world and ourselves. Therefore, the chief concerns regarding historiographic metafiction as a strategy that de-constructs and questions the sense of a totalised and closed history shall be stated. This strategy has served those who have been traditionally a mere peripheral part of the official "History", giving them a space where they can express their interpretations of real events. This issue provides us with a clash of various probable discourses of narrative representation.

Historiographic metafiction is employed today as a form of revisiting the past. Hutcheon styles historiographic metafiction as the tendency post-modern writers have of intertextually integrating forms and references to historical texts and traditions (Hutcheon 1989: 47-48). She outlines that there is a post-modern critical reflection of the "presence of the past"; in other words, how we can come to know the past today (Hutcheon 1989: 47). According to Hutcheon, the textual incorporation of intertextual pasts as a constructive structural element of post-modern fiction functions as a formal mark of historicity (Hutcheon 1989: 48). The issue of representation in both fiction and history has been tackled in terms of how we know the past (Hutcheon 1989: 58). The achievement of this objective involves an acknowledgement of its limitations. We only have access to the past through traces such as documents, testimony of witnesses or pictures, among other archival materials. It is through this archival material that we construct our narratives. Hutcheon points out that the representation of history has become the history of representation in our post-modern age (Hutcheon 1989: 58). In relation to the aforementioned, she also states:

> If the past is only known to us through its textualized traces (which, like all texts, are always open to interpretation), then the writing of both history and historiographic metafiction becomes a form of complex intertextual cross-

> referencing that operates within (and does not deny) its unavoidably discursive context (Hutcheon 1989: 81).

For Hutcheon, historians are readers of fragmentary documents, and like readers of fiction, they should fill in the gaps and create order out of them. This tendency may be further disrupted by new textual inconsistencies that will inevitably force the formation of new totalizing patterns (Hutcheon 1989: 87). What we get is not historical reality itself, but rather the historian's own action upon the data, which limit and order the historical narrative. Some postmodern art has felt the need to challenge this tradition. The history of representation is inescapable but it can be commented ironically, as will be explained later, through parodic intertextuality in the form of historiographic metafiction. In the case of Cliff's short story, irony is at work throughout the whole text. It is ironic that Valaida had to leave her home just to be recognised and in search of this validation she encounters what generations of Blacks suffer from in previous chapters of American history; indifference and isolation. She is put into a concentration camp because of her racial condition. She fails in finding an identity as a Black person, a woman and a musician in Europe. Indeed, she is separated from her trumpet, the symbol of herself, her voice and her history. At the beginning of the story, Europe means freedom and a new life; as the story progresses it acquires the reverse meaning: imprisonment and the loss of identity.

The contemporary study of history involves inquiry. Historians today wonder whether texts are shaped by reality or if reality is shaped by its textual representation. In relation to this, Waugh argues that "the present increased awareness of 'meta' levels of discourse and experience is partly a consequence of an increased social and cultural self-consciousness" (Waugh 1984: 2). Our interpretation of the past should discriminate between the brute events of the past and the historical facts we construct out of them. Hutcheon defines facts as events to which we have given meaning (Hutcheon 1989: 57).

Critic, Terry Eagleton states that literature and history are cultural productions. He elaborates on how discourse has no "definite signified" but it is rather a network of signifiers "able to envelop a whole field of meanings, objects and practices" (Eagleton 1983: 175). For him, considering there is a fixed canon is quite ironic because since literary critical discourse has "no definite signified", it can turn attention to any kind of writing; therefore, the exclusion of a text from the canon, according to Eagleton, is a "question of the arbitrary authority of the literary institution" (Eagleton 1983: 176). As a consequence of this process of turning events into facts, we are confronted with dissimilar historical perspectives that derive from diverse historical interpretations. In historiographic metafiction, the very process of turning events into facts through the interpretation of archival evidence is equivalent to turning traces of the past into historical representation. Historiography is no longer considered a disinterested recording of the past. It is precisely the endeavour to comprehend and master it that grants a certain meaning to the past (Hutcheon 1989: 64). Since it is known that it does not provide direct access to the past, the status of historical documents as an unquestionable truth has been altered: there must be a re-construction through the refiguring of the brute event. Past events exist empirically, and while they are not only textual, we can only discern them through texts.

The past appears confusing, plural and unstructured until the historian orders all its fragments into textual knowledge. According to many scholars, such as Hutcheon or McHale, the relation between past and present is the unresolved contradiction of representation in contemporary fiction. The primary concern of minority groups is to incorporate their interpretation of historical events into the great array of texts, which form the great network that is literature (McHale 1987: 35). Historiographic metafiction as a form of incorporating intertexts from history into certain narratives seems to be the

most accurate mode to achieve this objective. By doing so, writers integrate their renditions of the past and give themselves a voice within the facts they are narrating. Their desire to subvert the conventional construction of history is embedded. The texts they create metaphorically operate through many parodic intertextual traces. They work towards a "critical return to history and politics through metafictional self-consciousness and parodic intertextuality" (Hutcheon 1988: 131). Intertextual parody of canonical American and European classics and historical narratives is one mode of appropriating and reformulating, with a significant change, the dominant White, male, middle-class, heterosexual, Euro-centric culture (McHale 1987: 130).

In relation to this, Hutcheon underlines that postmodern fiction stresses even more than (if that were possible) the tensions that exist, on the one hand, between "the pastness (and absence) of the past, and the presentness (and presence) of the present, and on the other, between the actual events of the past and the historian's act of processing them into facts" (Hutcheon 1989: 73). Postmodern fiction criticises any notion of history as objective presentation of past events, rather than as interpretative representation of those past events, to which we give meaning as facts. All past events are potential historical facts, but only those chosen to be narrated become apparently true. Cliff, by choosing to tell us the story of Valaida Snow, is narrating a particular situation within a particular historical event. Yet, she warns us from the very beginning that everything is contrived. Her position towards what she is about to recount conveys that with what historiographic metafiction is embedding; no event is completely true because we are not able to know every instance of it. It is true that Valaida Snow existed, that she was a musician, that she travelled to Europe and that she was put into a Nazi concentration camp; those are the objective facts, but the rest is pure conjecture. From this departing point, Cliff creates her story and character and gives her a voice.

The author is interpreting the facts and providing us with a different perspective. The position of Valaida Snow is not crucial in the development of the historical events; yet, it serves us to apprehend that many individuals had her part within them and that their history is also a part of them. The same occurs in Senior's story; we know that many Jamaicans fought in World War II defending the interests of the Empire, as was the case of Mr Evadney. Readers are also informed of how after independence was achieved, a Labour Government and the Rasta movement appeared to shake the former British rule, both of which can be confirmed. Therefore, Senior is also including historical facts of the recent history of Jamaica and presenting characters that can be regarded as archetypes of the social status quo of the period and belong to the collective memory of Jamaicans.

In this background of interrogation and suspicion of the veracity of historical accounts that have reached us, there have been many attempts to deconstruct or, I Hutcheon's words, de-doxify[4] the traditional idea of history as a totalised limited act of narrative representation. The work of Dominique LaCapra acts to de-naturalise notions of historical documents as representations of historical events. LaCapra suggests that documents are not innocent because they always contain a critical transformation of the episodes recounted in them. A propos to this idea, Peter Brooks argues:

> We live immersed in narrative, recounting and reassessing the meaning of our past actions, anticipating the outcome of our future projects, situating ourselves at the intersection of several stories not yet completed (Brooks 1992: 3).

There are certain critical perspectives concerned with marginalized and oppressed communities and individuals, such as feminist and postcolonialist writers, who have

[4] This term comes from Barthes' notion of *Doxa*. Allen (2000: 212) defines it as follow: "Barthes' '-doxy' or '-doxa' mean opinion. Barthes uses this suffix as a term for anything which constitutes general opinion, or is at any one moment in society considered unquestionable or natural".

done much to deconstruct historiographic theory. It is admitted nowadays that what has become fact depends as much as anything else on the social and cultural context in which it is written. What has surfaced is different from the "unitary, closed, evolutionary narratives" of traditional historiographic constructions. What historiographic metafiction makes patent is that today we get histories and not History (Hutcheon 1989: 66). This new approach to history endeavours to give voice to those traditionally muted, minority groups who never were allowed to recount their own story and their own vision of the world. Anti-postmodernist criticism avers that this has been done at the expense of a sense of History. Traditionally, History has been told by heroic victors who had carried out the task of defining and constructing narrative representations. Definitions and language, that customarily have served to legitimise Western thought and culture, belong to the definers, or the equivalent of those with authority and power. The same happens with history, which has traditionally has been His-story, keeping those who are not White, male and powerful outside the processes of its creation. In the stories by Michelle Cliff and Olive Senior, two black Women are given voices, a history and a personality. These female characters are not mere observers of the events recounted, but rather a crucial part in them. Valaida and Mrs Evadney, the protagonist in Senior's story, serve the authors to recount the story of those who apparently had been outside the totalised version of history and as a representation of their stories. Cliff and Senior are using the language of the winners, of the oppressors, in order to authorise the perspectives of those who had been left out of the traditional version of history.

Today we often get, instead, the story and the story-telling of those who are not victors and the repressed, as it happens in the two short stories analysed here. Nigerian

author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her TED talk, “The Danger of a Single Story” (2009) states:

> Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to disposes and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanise. Stories can break the dignity of a people but stories can also repair that broken dignity (https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=es).

She argues that the “single history” of Africa ultimately comes from Western literature and claims that portraying people as only one thing over and over again perpetuates a certain image that leaves us with an incomplete representation. We now get the histories of both the losers and the winners, of the colonial power as well as the colonized, of women as well as men. We finally hear the voices of those who claimed to have won the Second World War and of those who were repressed in it, as in the case of the person upon which this story is based. This way we find heterogeneous discourses that explore the sometimes indefinable of the past. Hutcheon, in concordance with this last point asserts:

> Post-modern fiction like this exploits and yet simultaneously calls into question notions of closure, totalization, and universality that are part of those challenged grand narratives. Rather than seeing this paradoxical use and abuse as a sign of decadence or as a cause for despair, it might be possible to postulate a less negative interpretation that would allow for at least the potential for radical critical possibilities (Hutcheon 1989: 70).

In a sense, Hutcheon is calling for a rethinking of the social, political and historical representations of our world. From her perspective, one can trace that history is not only constructed through one of the parts’ narrative but through a compilation of different experiences and views of the same event. It is as if there was a need to search for the perspectives that had for so long been silenced so as to fully understand the historical development and the social constructions of our society.

María José Chivite's work *Echoes of History, Shadowed Identities: Rewriting Alterity in J. M. Coetzee's Foe and Marina Warner's Indigo* (2009) analyses Coetzee and Warner's rewriting of canonical novels from the light of intertextual parody. She tackles the way in which these authors have provided peripheral characters with a voice challenging the canonical representation of "the other" in these texts. Chivite states that these texts challenge monological representations of reality:

> The historiographic irony of this type of parodic novel dates - and thus - de-naturalises any alleged universal authority- the texts and discourses aspire to appropriate monologically the representation of reality (Chivite 2009: 45).

Postcolonial authors attempt to interrogate the idea of a unique history. They endorse the settlers' colonialist discourse that considers the European immigrants and their descendants born in colonies as legitimate proprietors of both history and culture. The Empire reduced the colonies to history-less places where they could recreate their own universe. Colonisers portray colonies as places without past and traditions, waiting to be westernised. Postcolonial authors challenge colonial monolithic discourse and propose a new model of interpretation that re-situates the historical, ideological and conceptual otherness of the colonial tradition. Chivite argues that rewriting is necessary to counteract this resilient discourse:

> Rewriting is necessarily counter-discursive; therefore, it betrays the hypotext's gaps and holes just to arrange them differently, deliberately exposing their- both the hypotext's and the hypertext's tight intertextual overdetermination (Chivite 2009: 48)

By rewriting canonical texts, postcolonial authors are filling the historical gaps left by colonial discourse; former colonies are given a history and a past that Imperialism tried to hide to justify their position in those territories. These authors explore imperial intellectual history and show how ideas related to race, culture, identity and Otherness

served as a template for colonialist ideology. They remap their roots by showing an alternative discourse that tries to overcome negative interpretation of native cultures.

"The Chocho Vine" is one of the stories in Olive Senior's short story collection *Discerner of Hearts.* This is a story about isolation and survival. It is about defending oneself from the threat risking the undergoing of certain changes. It is the story of Miss Evadney and her precious chocho vine. Miss Evadney's chocho vine is the only thing that flourishes in her life. Her existence develops around the tree she once planted and takes special care of every day. By employing the symbol of the tree, Senior tackles both the story of this old lady and portrays the changes her own country and its people had gone through. Differently from the character of Valaida Snow, in Cliff's story, who is claimed to have been a real person, Miss Evadney could have been any Jamaican woman at the time. Senior creates an archetype to represent the generational conflicts that appeared after independence in Jamaica. Just as the author does with "Discerner of Hearts", the history of Jamaica is portrayed through the gender and racial conflict between the inhabitants of a country permeated by colonialism and its rule. Miss Evadney represents the colonised subject, whereas the Rasta men in the story are representative of a new time after colonialism.

Miss Evadney is old, ill and alone. Her husband died and her three children moved to Kingston never to come back again. Her only company is that of Miss Vie and her daughter Hermione. Miss Evadney's second son made her sell almost all her property and then left with the money. She was left alone and poor. One day, a group of Rasta men moved into the house next door, which in the past had belonged to her and her husband. She was not very happy with the idea of having them next door; Rasta men represented something unknown for her. Yet, they were taking care of the land and renovated the dilapidated house. Miss Evadney forgot about them until she found them

stealing the chochos off her chocho vine from over the wall that separated the two properties. Her chocho vine was everything to her. She had taken care of the tree since she planted it and now she earned money by selling its fruits. She was furious when she saw them robbing her chochos. First, she tried to talk to them, but she was not successful. She decided to take action: she guarded the tree day and night until she was exhausted. When she thought the men were not coming again, she left it, but the tree started to lose its greatness and vividness. It got worse every day until it was almost dead. Miss Evadney asked Miss Vie to climb up the wall to check what was happening with the tree, and she discovered someone had cut it in two, which was why the tree was dying.

This story is told by a third person omniscient narrator who "knows everything that needs to be known about the agents, actions, and events, and also has privileged access to characters' thoughts, feelings and motives; and the narrator is free to move at will in time and place, to shift from character, and to report (or conceal) their speech, doings and states of consciousness" (Abrams 1957: 166). The narrator in this story knows all the details of the story as they occurred in the past, although there are instances in which readers get the voice of the main character Miss Evadney. The narrator takes both a temporal and a psychological distance from the story. This omniscient voice reminds readers of the typical narrator in fairy tales, and following the same pattern, Senior followed in other stories. The story seems to be something occurring in a remote past and it is written so as to be told. Yet, the story portrays the situation lived in Jamaica after independence when the socialist president Michael Mandy was in charge. There was a big change:

> Something strange was happening in the whole country these days anyway, Miss Evadney thought, changes were everywhere, all was topsy-turvy and confusion, it would stir up your brain to take it all in. New people were moving into the

> area every day. That wasn't too surprising, for all the young people had gone away: only the old people were left and the grandchildren that they had to mind (Senior 1995: 149).

For older people all over the country these changes were not easy to accept. Youngsters moved to Kingston in order to find a better job; as they were no longer interested in land ownership. This fact is represented by Miss Evadney's boys, who leave for good in order to find a job that gives them what they consider to be a better life. Many things became public and Rastafarianism was greatly empowered. Rastafarianism began to succeed as a way of life in Jamaica in the 1930s. It was considered a great symbol of the liberation for Black people in this country. All those descending from former slaves embraced this philosophy as a means of gathering together separately from the Whites as well as liberation from White supremacy. At the beginning it was a minority movement for poor people, but in the 1970s became very fashionable in the middle class. The use of cannabis increased because Rastafari claimed that the Bible states that God provided men with all kinds of herbs to be used. They also became vegetarians. Many people moved to the countryside in order to have their own farms. Rasta people also have an androcentric view of life: man is to be the king and woman the queen and provider of food. It is of great significance that Miss Evadney provides her Rasta neighbours with food, with her chochos:

> "Young man. Young man, " she said, "is my chocho that you are picking, you know?" She expected that he would say, "sorry", and she would say, "Is all right this time, I don't mind you take a few. But next time, if you want chocho, all you have to do is ask. I only sell them at twenty cents a piece". To her amazement. Though, the young man laughed when she called out to him and continued pulling down chochos. "Mother rest yuself. You have plenty chocho to spare."…"Mother" he called out, still laughing, " you nuh hear is Socialist time now? All a we must share. Nothing nuh belong to you any more." (Senior 1995: 149).

The Rasta men feel free to collect all the chochos Miss Evadney has on her tree because times have changed and according to them socialism promotes the sharing of one's

goods. They also believe that everything in nature can be used by anybody: the old woman's garden, therefore, is also there for their needs. By this token, they also share what they have with her. Suddenly, Miss Evadney starts to receive food on her doorstep. Once she discovers it was them who were leaving the food there, she refused it, even though she was in great need. She does not agree with their view of everything belonging to everyone. She had been watering and taking care of that chocho for a long time and considers it hers; the vine is on her property and she uses the fruits to earn a bit of money for her own survival. At first the fruit on the tree was not necessary for her. She even gave chochos to all those in need of food for free. Yet, as the years passed, Miss Evadney had lost her position and most of her property and the chochos began to provide her with a source of income, albeit meagre. She feels that she has been working the land and the chocho vine for many years, and deserves to be able to live off it. If the Rastafaris steal her chochos, she has nothing left: she has lost the rest of her property, her children, her husband and she is not going to lose her most precious treasure as well, her chocho vine:

> "Plant ganja! Everybody plant ganja these day," Miss Evadney cried. "That is the only thing them young people farming. Them all a plant ganja. Mek them gwan. Them could plant the whole world in ganja for all I care. But that don't give them no right to take stick to pick my chocho. I bring up my boys to know right from wrong and to respect other people property. That is one thing I beat into them. Nobody could ever complain that any of my boys ever put hand on what don't belong to them. So why I should put up with other people thieving from me?" (Senior 1995: 150-151).

In this excerpt, Miss Evadney is establishing her standards. She does not seem to agree with the cannabis issue, but as long as they do not disturb her or her property she does not care at all. She says that at that time every youngster devoted the land to cannabis farming. Most of the young people in the countryside had left and Rasta men moved to the country to provide themselves with their herbs and vegetables. They act differently than the rest of the young people she knows. Her own children left for Kingston to find

a job, which was considered the right thing to do. She says she taught her children to distinguish right from wrong; yet, have they learnt it? They have jobs and probably have never stolen anything, but they have left their mother unattended and poor. Maybe the standards of her own children greatly differ from her own. Miss Evadney gives great importance to property and feels that everything on hers cannot be touched without her permission. Yet, the Rasta men next door believe in sharing and do not respect other's properties. Their different ways of seeing life is the major conflict in the story.

There is a big clash between tradition and change in this story. Independence and the new political order at first created a great sense of instability in the whole country. Miss Evadney stands for tradition and the life in the country before independence, and her sons and the Rasta men represent the changes and the new order in Jamaica after independence. There was a great economic crisis and the country had to find solutions for new problems like unemployment and violence between the races. Furthermore, Jamaicans had to create their own national identity after independence. Wealth and comfort were linked to Whites, and poverty and unemployment were linked to Blacks. When Mandy reached power, Blacks felt relieved after so many years of White supremacy. The economic crisis forced many youngsters to leave the countryside and move to the only big city, Kingston, in order to find jobs in factories and as construction workers. Miss Evadney's boys moved to the city, too. Leroy, the older one, was the first to leave. Apparently he left with one of the Pettigrew girls, the daughter of someone who was Miss Evadney's enemy for having stolen some of her chochos in the past. She cannot believe her own son could do such a thing, and again, her own son has put her standards into question. Mighty, the youngest one, disappeared without even telling his mother. The only one left was Everald, and Miss Evadney was afraid of losing him too:

> She knew what was coming next but this time she prayed. She prayed like she never prayed for anything else in her life, prayed that Everald wouldn't leave her, too. Miss Evadney always said she thought it was like the devil was dealing that deck there, for look what Everald turned around and did. She was so afraid of losing him that she gave no thought to the land, said yes when he came and asked her if she would sell the land and lend him the money (Senior 1995: 146).

Miss Evadney's fears serve her own son to take advantage of the situation and get her to sell the land to take the money himself. Before doing this, Everald brought a woman into her mother's house. Then the couple built their own house within her property and continued to work the land. But he was offered a job as an asphalt road builder and left too. Then he came back to his mother to ask her to sell the land. He now needed money to start anew with his family in the city. Miss Evadney sold everything but the house and a small piece of land. Everald never returned her the money. This is why she complains she needs to sell the chochos:

> "Where is that money now, eh?" she asked Hermione, for about the hundredth time. "Once Mister Everald get his hand on it, never see hide or hair again. That Everald with his sweet mouths! Is when last I see him? Tell me nuh?" Once in a while Everald would come, she reported, or his grown-up children would breeze by and leave her a little something. All driving their flashy big cars. But if she was waiting on them to live, she would starve to death. If it wasn't for Miss Vie and Hermione, God knows what would happen to her. She was glad she had chocho to give them, for her mother always told her, "Hand wash hand. Never take something for nothing"…Anyone who came by and wanted chocho now had to pay, unless she knew they were poor like her; only then she would give (Senior 1995: 147).

Miss Evadney complains, her own son has taken advantage of her and has left her alone and poor. Her own son's ambition has left her unattended and with no possibility of making a living out of anything. He wanted to give his children a good education and have a good house in the city. Once he has got all he wanted he forgot who helps him doing it. Everald embraces the new way of living without thinking about the consequences it may have for his mother. Miss Evadney represents tradition while Everald stands for the new order; he has different expectations. He is to develop the same way the country does it. Now, with the independence, blacks have more

possibilities to change their social position. It is as if youngsters were now the owners of the country and the ones responsible for its development. Miss Evadney believes that you cannot get anything for nothing. She has always used her chochos to give them to those she considered she was indebted to. Her son takes the money and neither returns it nor anything in return, the same the rastas take the chochos without asking.

The primary concern of these minority groups is to incorporate their interpretation of historical events into the great array of texts, which form the great network, which is literature (McHale 1987:35). Historiographic metafiction as a form of incorporating intertexts from history into certain narratives seems to be the most accurate mode to achieve this objective. By doing it, writers integrate their renditions of the past and give themselves a voice within the facts they are narrating. Their desire to subvert the conventional construction of history is embedded. The texts they create metaphorically operate through many parodic intertextual traces. They work towards "a critical return to history and politics through metafictional self-consciousness and parodic intertextuality" (Hutcheon 1988: 131). Intertextual parody of canonical American and European classics and historical narratives is one mode of appropriating and reformulating, with a significant change, the dominant white, male, middle-class, heterosexual, Euro-centric culture (Hutcheon 1988: 130). Parody, for minority writers, is more than just a key strategy through which they incorporate historical remarkable accounts they consider of importance; it is also one of the major ways in which women and other "ex-centrics" both use and abuse, set up and then challenge male traditions in art (McHale 1987: 134). Parody is a means of revisiting the past. Parody serves these writers to restore history and memory in the face of the distortions of the "history of forgetting" (McHale 1987: 129). That way, they also put into question the authority of any act of writing by "locating the discourses of both history and fiction within an ever-

expanding intertextual network that mocks any notion of either single origin or simple causality" (McHale 1987: 129).

In *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988), Hutcheon also deals with parody and analyses various contemporary texts in order to explain how intertextuality works in them. Hutcheon as well as other theorists conceive parody as the most appropriate form where intertextuality makes itself evident and its principal intentions are found. Therefore, parody can be considered as a sign of intertextuality at work. Moreover, parody is regarded as the perfect literary mode for the objectives of postmodernism to be achieved when dealing with former texts within the literary network: "To parody is not to destroy the past; in fact, to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it. And this is the postmodern paradox" (Hutcheon 1988: 126). Hutcheon suggests that parody expresses a duality: it conflates both negative and positive connotations at the same time. Since postmodernism itself, in her view, is double-codedness, parody by enhancing this duality as well, becomes the adequate mode of intertextuality within the postmodernist climate. Parody as a literary device reflexes "a double movement of affiliation and detachment" (O'Donnell and Davis 1989: xviii). Intertextual parody functions opening a text up, offering this way an innovative vision of old myths and previous representations. Allen expresses his disappointment concerning Hutcheon's employment of intertextuality and parody as synonyms, because he wonders if it cannot but lead us to confusion. Yet, the above said proves Hutcheon right if we take into account that it expresses the paradox postmodernism wants to convey. In fact, intertextuality can only work through parody in postmodernism because it can relate two texts in an ironic way in order to provoke a rethinking of the former one. Hutcheon clarifies that parody is not ahistorical or de-historizing. It does not wrest past narrations

from their originals historical context. It signals how present representations come from past ones and marks what ideological consequences derive from transforming them.

In addition to this, Hutcheon underlines that postmodern fiction stresses even more the tensions that exist, on the one hand, between "the pastness (and absence) of the past and the presentness (and presence) of the present", and on the other, between "the actual events of the past and the historian's act of processing them into facts" (Hutcheon 1989: 73). Postmodern fiction criticises any notion of history as objective presentation of past events, rather than as interpretative representation of those past events, to which we give meaning as facts. All past events are potential historical facts, but only those chosen to be narrated become truly ones. In this background of interrogation and suspicion of the veracity of the historical accounts that have reached us, there have been many attempts to deconstruct the traditional idea of history as a totalized limited act of narrative representation.

In Senior and Cliff's stories, we find a questioning of the unitary and totalised history constructed by the cultures in power. To counteract this taken-for-granted appreciation of history, In Cliff's, readers get the perspective of a black female character who, flying away from the marginalisation she lived in her own country, encounters something similar but that has really nothing to do with her. In her own country she had to struggle isolation and her ancestors even slavery in order to get certain rights. In Europe under the Nazi rule she is not even fighting for anything that could benefit her or her people. The Second World War and its influence in the British Empire, also appears in Senior's "The Chocho Vine". Miss Evadney lives alone except for her chocho vine. Her husband has died long time ago and her three boys have left for good. The only people who pay any kind of attention to Miss Evadney are Miss Vie and her family. She married Mr Shaw just after he came back from II World War:

> Mr Shaw had just come back from the Great War, in which he had served as a volunteer. He had ten acres of land, was expecting to get his soldier's pension, and he wanted to settle down with someone. Though the white people had fixed him up in the hospital, his head still felt groggy and his chest wheezed sometimes, but he knew all this would go away once he got a good woman to look after him…so went to her parents and took off his hat and asked for her hand in marriage (Senior 1995: 137-138).

There is no hint of love in their relationship. They simply did what they were supposed to do; marry in order to work the land and take care of the household. For him it was a means of having someone to look after him and his house while he worked the fields. For Miss Evadney, this marriage was a source of pride. In her community the only way out for women was to be married; she feels lucky, Mr Shaw has chosen her:

> "Well, the other girls were so jealous afterwards!" Miss Evadney loved to say. "Here I was a married woman! And Mr Shaw would never allow me to work again. Would never hear of his wife working. I never ever went to the ground like the other women and I never work in nobody's kitchen neither" (Senior 1995: 138).

As a former soldier, Mr Shaw has a pension and he has been given ten acres of land. By marrying him, Miss Evadney is guaranteeing herself a better life from that of the other girls in her town can have. She devotes her time to Mr Shaw and the three boys they has. But Mr Shaw becomes sick and the boys start giving her trouble.

The "post-modern questioning", implies the fact that as it is impossible to reach a total compiling of all the instances of a particular event or story, authenticity is not likely to be achieved. This is why Cliff's comment at the beginning is a game in itself. We all know she is not trying to portray all the instances of Valaida Snow's life; yet, she has taken her as her inspiring to talk about repression and the difficulties of those considered "others" in recounting their stories and their part in historical events. Taking into account that authenticity is no longer attainable, many contemporary writers struggle against official texts in our culture by rewriting them with the aim of offering new possibilities. Considering the above, the function of historiographic metafiction as

a type of intertextuality in this environment acquires great importance. Historiographic metafiction is self-conscious about the totalising traditional idea of narrative representation. This is why, it overtly tries to "de-doxify" received notions about the processes of representing the real in narrative. It maps out how events are transformed into facts, undermining the conventions of historiography. The past did exist but the only manner we have of knowing it is through its textual traces and the representation of these traces in the present. Historiographic metafiction attempts to subvert these traditional modes of representation transforming them. Hence, historiographic metafiction provides a variety of discourses including those traditionally muted, challenging in the process the idea of a unique History by incorporating other viewpoints of certain historical events: such is the case of Valaida Snow's version. She provides us the perspective of a black woman as regards certain events occurring in her time. The fact that she wanted to escape from the USA represents her desire to be considered an equal for once; to be known by her music not by her being a black woman. She wants to be recognised as a musician. She wants to be someone else and to be let alone. She thinks of this trip as a reverse middle passage:

> She wants to be left alone. She wants them to stop asking for vocals in the middle of a riff…she wants a place to practice her horn, to blow. To blow rings around herself. So she blows the USA and heads out. On a ship (Cliff 1990: 56).

In the present time of the narrative, we often get, instead, the story and the story-telling of the losers and the repressed, as it happens in most of the short stories by Michelle Cliff and Olive Senior, I analyse in this thesis. We nowadays get the "histories" of both the losers and the winners, of the colonial as well as of the centrist, of women as well as men. This way we find heterogeneous discourses that explore the sometimes undecidable of the past. Hutcheon, in concordance to this last point asserts:

> Post-modern fiction like this exploits and yet simultaneously calls into question notions of closure, totalization, and universality that are part of those challenged grand narratives. Rather than seeing this paradoxical use and abuse as a sign of decadence or as a cause for despair, it might be possible to postulate a less negative interpretation that would allow for at least the potential for radical critical possibilities (Hutcheon 1989:70).

In a sense, Hutcheon is calling for a rethinking of the social, political and historical representations of our world.

Many contemporary writers try to struggle against the official texts in our culture by rewriting them with the aim of offering new possibilities. Considering the above, the function of historiographic metafiction as a type of intertextuality in this environment acquires great importance. In relation to the stated above, Linda Hutcheon (1988: 125) suggests postmodernist art is double-codedness. This can be explained if we consider that postmodernist art questions the available modes of representation in our culture but always recognising that it must employ those modes. There is a general agreement among critics in highlighting the duplicity of posmodernism, because it is clearly believed that it attempts to challenge conventions established in the past but by utilizing them. In post-modern fiction this doublings can be seen in the way writers ironically appropriate existing texts and images so as to change them. In *Politics of postmodernism,* Hutcheon asserts that this return to previous texts within the literary network cannot be but political due to the fact that it is not a nostalgic coming back but a critical one. In her opinion postmodernism legitimises culture but at the same time subverts it (Hutcheon 1989: 3)

Historiographic metafiction is self-conscious about the totalising traditional idea of narrative representation. This is why it overtly tries to “de-doxify” received notions about the processes of representing the real in narrative. It maps out how events are transformed into facts, undermining the conventions of historiography. The past did

exist but the only manner we have of knowing it is through its textual traces and the representation of these traces in the present. Historiographic metafiction attempts to subvert these traditional modes of representation by transforming them through the light of contemporary moves such as feminism or postmodernism. Historiographic metafiction provides us with diverse discourses of those traditionally mute who challenge the idea of a unique History by incorporating their own views of certain historical events. In relation to this, Adichie concludes:

> The single story creates stereotypes and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but incomplete. They make one story become the single story. It robs people of dignity- emphasises difference rather than equality (https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=es)

Traditional Western history presents stereotypical "others" who are this way dispossessed of their humanity and subjectivity so that it is easier to inscribe them within a single and closed idea of society and culture. Senior and Cliff recover the latent historical content and construct their own narratives upon this early feminist transgressed thought, enlarge it substantially and transform it in a contemporary context. By doing so, they create a narrative in which two different texts are in conflict. Intertextuality generates a tension between the elements borrowed from the source text and the new ones incorporated in a subversive manner. According to Blau DuPlessis (in Arnds 2001: 418), there are two different types of revisionary mythmaking that could be applied to these authors as modern rewritings of historical accounts: displacement or the shifting attention to otherness in the story, and deligitimation, or a criticism of priorities of narrative. In the texts I shall be analysing, the native woman figure is centralised by displacing the white male perspective and the various roles that determined the historical renditions are delegitimised and re-evaluated, as I will now explain.

Considering historiographic metafiction as a way of telling past events from different points of view so as to challenge traditional accounts, it is outstanding to mention the notion of "revisionist historical novel". The term was coined by Brian McHale, and it refers novels which deal with historical events in an attempt to interpret them under a political light (McHale 1987: 245). For him, these novels revise and interpret the official historical record and transform the conventions of historical fiction. According to Hutcheon, the type of work coined by McHale "revisionist historical novel" is the type of novel that works toward a critical return to history and politics through parodic intertextuality and metafictional self-consciousness (Hutcheon 1989:61). These kinds of novels do not merely rewrite, refashion or expropriate history; instead, they juxtapose what we think about the past with an alternative representation that foregrounds the epistemological question of the nature of historical knowledge (Hutcheon 1989:57-58). Historically based novels focus on the process of event becoming fact in drawing attention to the status of the real and the fictive due to the fact that the non-fictional is as constructed as it is fiction. In these novels, the historical and the fictive are mixed in the storytelling as a part of the narrative. This mixture poses the question of discourse shaping reality or reality shaping discourse. They raise the issue of how the intertexts of history (documents, traces) get incorporated into a fictional context but always maintaining their historical value. Hutcheon suggests that "revisionist historical novels" consistently use and abuse historical documents in such a way as to stress both the discursive nature of the representations of the past embedded on them and the narrativised form in which we read them (Hutcheon 1989:61). Feminist artists point directly to the history and the historical power of those cultural representations, while they ironically contextualise them so as to deconstruct those representations used as parodic strategies.

Historiographic metafiction directly addresses the relation that exists between the representation in both novel and history. Yet, one can resolute that in contemporary debates, both history-telling and story-telling are inevitably linked. The past comes to us today through its representation in ideologically constructed narratives. History is parodied in our contemporary world so as to provide a different perspective from the traditional one. The teller is who constructs truth out of facts. Facts do not speak for themselves in a form of narrative; it is the teller who speaks for them, transforming the fragments of the past into a discursive whole. Within this tendency, the original and the real lose importance in comparison with the copy and the fictional. Michelle Cliff's "A Woman who Plays the Trumpet is Deported" can be analysed from this revisionist perspective. It can be explored as a cultural translation of a concrete period of the history and the subtexts it has produced. Characters and plot can be analysed through a black feminist fashion. The author has disrupted the historical representations embedded in the historical documents by fashioning a space for her female protagonist and by providing her readers with a total different interpretation of the events narrated in the official records of history; Cliff has transmigrated a real person and re-organised the action around her. Two intertexts in conflict exist in the story; the official historical account and the new set of features the author has brought into the text so as to obtain the desired result. This mixture generates playful interactions that force readers to question the images presented in the historical accounts by contrasting them with the one presented in this story.

Michelle Cliff has chosen a real character in order to create her own story. As I have stated before, Valaida, (the real person) was a black American woman who decided to leave the USA to work in Paris as a trumpet player. It is also true that she spent several years in a concentration camp when the Second World War started.

Finally she was liberated and died because of the terrible condition in which this experience had left her. All these are the actual facts upon which Cliff has created her character. Fiction starts the moment in which the author enters the character's mind as if Valaida Snow herself were speaking. The story starts with the voice of Valaida. Valaida is addressing the narrator and telling her how, Billie Holiday once came to her in a dream:

> She came to me in a dream and said: 'Girl, you have no idea how tough it was. I remember once Billie Holiday was lying in a field of clover. Just resting. And a breeze came and the pollen from the clover blew all over her and the police came out of nowhere and arrested her for possession. 'And the stuff was red…it wasn't even white' (Cliff 1990: 55).

Here, the narrator is explaining how, Valaida Snow came to her in a dream and told her some story about Billie Holiday. By doing so, the narrator is authorising her story. She is even including a well-known jazz musician such as Billie Holiday in order to provide the story with a bit of reality. The reader encounters Valaida Snow taking to the narrator in a dream about Billie Holiday and how she was arrested for possession of drugs. The last sentence of the quotation emphasises the issue of colour. She was arrested, not because the clover was white but because she was not. This is the reason why according to the narrator, Valaida decides to go to Europe; no one there would call her nigger. Again, the narrator is giving readers hints on the authority of the text in this respect:

> This woman tucks her horn under her arm and packs a satchel and sets her course. Paris first.
> This woman flees to Europe. No, flee is not the word. Escape? Not quite right (Cliff 1990: 55).

The narrator really does not know whether Valaida wants to escape or not. The choice of words marks the inconsistency of the narrator's knowledge towards the character's feelings. Yet, a narrator usually knows about these types of facts. Here, the author is trying to interpret the feelings of Valaida, the real person rather than talking about the

character's wish. She claims that she does not really know Valaida Snow's actual circumstances to leave. Thus, the reliability of the narrator is put into question. It is impossible for her to know if this was the case and says it openly because when someone is narrating the facts in a person's life unavoidably some aspects are left to question and only those that are truly objective aspects can be reliable. With this comment, readers are aware that even though this woman really existed, the Valaida Snow of the story is a mere creation of the author.

Music is also an important aspect in this story. The main character is defined as a "woman with chops", someone who plays the trumpet. The narrator explains how during the thirties she was very successful: "It is the thirties. She has been fairly successful. For a woman, black, with an instrument not made for her. Not made of flesh but of metal" (Cliff 1990: 55). Valaida managed to be successful in a world she clearly does not belong to. Being a black woman put her in a difficult position in a world of men and in a country where the situation as regards racial issues was quite complicated. Yet, Valaida succeeded in expressing herself with her horn. It was like another part of her. The image of Valaida playing the trumpet has clear sexual connotations.

> A metal instrument that she managed to give life every time she played it. In the ship, the steward assigned to her was Senegalese. They seek each other and communicate through the horn and his silver drum:
> The ship is French. The steward assigned to her Senegalese.
> They seek each other out by night, after families have retired. They meet in the covered lifeboats. They communicate through her horn and by his silver drum.
> He noticed the horn when he came the very first night at sea to turn down her bed. Pointed at it, her. The next morning introduced her to his drum.
> The horn is brass. The drum, silver. Metal beaten into memory, history. She traces her hand along the ridges of silver- horse, spear, warrior. Her finger catches the edge of a breast; lingers. The skin drumhead as tight as anything.
> In the covered lifeboats by night they converse, dispersing the silence of the deck, charging the air, upsetting the complacency, the well- being that hovers, to return the next day.
> Think of this as a reverse middle passage.
> Who is to say he is not her people? (Cliff 1990: 56-57).

This man speaks French, so they cannot use words to communicate. It is through music and colour that they talk to each other. The two metal instruments encounter and the air is full with the music they play. The narrator talks about, memory and history; Western thought has always considered all blacks came from the same place, had the same history and experiences and speak the same language. This man does not belong to her world and speaks a different language. Yet, they both share their passion for music and the colour of their skin. As the narrator says, this trip back to Europe in the company of this man and their music, could be considered a reverse middle passage in which race would be the only element that links them if there have not been for music. Even though she is American, the origins of her people are back in Africa and the colour of her skin clearly situates her there too. Once she is in Paris, things appear to go well. She finds a club to play her trumpet. She makes a living out of it and feels comfortable and even free:

> A child points to the top of his créme brulée and then at her, smiles. Okay.
> But no one calls her nigger. Or asks her to leave. Or asks her to sit away from the window at the darker table in the back by the kitchen, hustling her so each course tumbles into another. Crudités into timbale into caramel.
> This place suits her fine (Cliff 1990: 58).

Valaida feels this is what she was looking for when she left America. No one tells her where to sit or to leave. She plays her trumpet and she is paid for it. Finally she can live the life she has always wanted. Yet, in 1940, all the clubs at the Quartier Latin close. Everybody starts to leave Paris and she feels trapped in a situation she does not understand. She goes to Copenhagen and it is there where she is captured by the Nazis. She finds herself in a line of women and children with the only companionship of her horn. The trumpet is the way she has of communicating. She does not understand a word they say, yet, she has her trumpet. Valaida does not want to leave it, she knows that without it she would become a blank page; someone with no voice or identity. But,

finally she has to leave it in one of the middens in which all the belongings of the people in the line are left. It is at this moment when the nazis and history and memory take her personality and dignity out of her.

In the case of Senior, she portrays crucial historical events of the period as seen through the eyes of Miss Evadney. Miss Evadney, as an old woman, is described as a strong and resolute person, but according to the narrator she has not always been so:

> When she was first married Miss Evadney wasn't at all quarrelsome. Mr Shaw was at his ground all day and she sang as she went around doing her chores and she set his meal on the table the minute he came home. But then Mr Shaw began to get sickly: it happened to a lot of people who had gone away to the war – "fighting to king and country," he proudly used to say even on his sick- bed, though she was vexed that King and Country never knew anything about his coughing out his soul-case and having to take to his bed more and more. And that was the time the boys started to give trouble and back- answer her (Senior 1995: 140).

It seems that all she has to go through in her life makes her stronger and more quarrelsome, specially her husband's illness and the fact that she has to take care of the land and the children. She blames the war and the British for her husband's illness. He fought for a country that was not his. This war was not his and Miss Evadney feels they took advantage of him and that nobody was worried when he was ill except for her. Her husband feels proud about it and in a sense as belonging to all this big Empire. The colonisers used these people as they needed them to then leave them unattended; it was enough to make them think they were protected by their mother home. Mr Shaw shared this idea and embraced the way of life given by Great Britain. He was a British citizen to fight but not to be looked after. With the independence and the subsequent political change people began to create their own political and cultural identities outside the British crown. The death of Mr Shaw marks the end of a time and the beginning of another. People in Jamaica do not belong to the Empire anymore. As it is represented in the story, this fact creates a sense of freedom but also of instability because of having

been left unattended by the former mother country. It is like a new born child left alone to develop his/her identity by him/herself. They can develop their free will but they are also alienated because of the tight links colonisation has created.

Miss Evadney appears to be, throughout the whole story, as a woman who is developing her identity. When she married Mr Shaw, she was neither quarrelsome nor strong. Later in the story she is described differently: first as a tempered woman and then as an old woman whose voice is almost lost. She oscillates between self-confidence and insecurity throughout the whole story. She appeared to be very strong when her husband died and her children started to behave badly but then she was very weak praying for them not to leave. Yet, when the chocho vine was cut, Miss Evadney seems to be at all her strength:

> She was shocked, she was speechless for a moment. But not for so long. As soon as she recovered, she let him have the full length of her tongue. Miss Evadney thought she still had the voice she had used in the past to stun her children and frighten chocho thieves. But it had got so trembling and thin, it sounded laughably frail to the young man next door (Senior 1995: 149).

As one can infer from this excerpt, for a long time she had been very strong and had defended her standards with great emphasis; she took care of her house, children and husband hardly, yet, now that she is old she seems to have lost all her strength and power. Her life has been turned upside down and all she believed in before no longer exists. She feels alienated and shocked by the circumstances she finds herself. This is why, when the rasta man next door is stealing her chochos, her anger makes her temper emerge but her voice and strength do not help her at the beginning. She is older and weaker and all she has believed all her life does not serve her anymore. The man is stealing her chochos, her most precious good and she cannot do anything. Yet, Miss Evadney's anger increases greatly and decides to take action and recover her strong

voice and temper to defend her property, her tree and herself from the incursion of these new rules she cannot understand or share.

Miss Evadney feels frustrated for not having had a daughter. She spends a lot of time with Miss Vie and her family, and especially with Miss Vie's daughter, Hermione. Everytime, the girl comes back from Kingston to visit her parents she pays a visit to Miss Evadney:

> Of all Miss Vie's children, Miss Evadney loved Hermione the best. Hermione never ever came to visit her mother without bringing something for Miss Evadney.
>
> Whenever Hermione visited her parents in the country, she always left with some of Miss Evadney's chochos. It was now a family joke: Miss Evadney and her chochos. Hermione hated the squash-like vegetables, regarding them as useless, tasteless things, and she always gave hers away. But she took the gift from Miss Evadney with many thanks, because she knew the old lady was proud to have something to give (Senior 1995: 143).

Even though the girl does not like the chochos she appreciates Miss Evadney's gift and associates them with her. For Miss Evadney, Hermione is the daughter she never had. She always pays attention to her and listens to the same stories once and again. Miss Evadney feels indebted with her because of this and gives her her chochos in return. For Hermione, the chochos are significant because Miss Evadney has given them to her as something precious. She sells them to the rest of the world, but not to Hermione. The girl knows it and acts consequently; she accepts the present even though she does not like the vegetables. The girl treats her as someone special. Every time she comes back to visit her parents she visits Miss Evadney and takes care of her like a daughter would do. Hermione is occupying the position her own sons had left. She gives the old woman what she would have expected from her own sons.

In this story there are two subplots in progress: Miss Evadney's history and that of the tree. It flourishes in Miss Evadney's neglected yard. For many years it has been

Miss Evadney's pride and now it serves her to earn money. It has provided many people in the surroundings with something to eat. At the time the story develops, the tree is the only thing Miss Evadney cares about as the only living thing that has never left her aside. The tree is described at the beginning of the story:

> The only thing that flourished in Miss Evadney's yard was her chocho vine. Her son had made her sell off all the property except for the square surrounding the house, and this piece of land, neglected like her, was nothing now but hard-packed red dirt trampled by so many feet over the years, sluiced so clean by the rain and by dirty water flung from kitchen and bedroom windows, that it had acquired a shiny red patina like the ox-blood shoes her husband used to wear (Senior 1995: 135).

The situation of Miss Evadney with her arthritis and her pressure and her land contrasts greatly with that of the chocho vine; big, beautiful and fruitful. The more tired and neglected is the woman, the greater is the vine. Her fruits give her life. Everybody has left her except the tree, which is even personified in the story:

> The chocho vine evidently felt no fear, for in the back right-hand corner, up against the property line, it had literally captured a whole quarter of the yard, sweeping majestically over the arbour of split bamboo originally built and extended many times to hold it, clambering over the abandoned chicken coop, and then aiming upwards to almost completely smother the old Number Eleven mango tree which had after a while given up the battle and simply ceasd bearing. (Senior 1995: 135-136)

The vine, contrarily to Miss Evadney, is robust and grows bigger and bigger every day. It flourishes in a neglected land owned by a neglected woman and it seems to take all the energy. Her own property reflects her own physical condition. Miss Evadney is old and tired like the house and the land. Yet, the tree symbolises what Miss Evadney used to be. It provides her with food and life. This is why when the Rasta men touch it she gets mad. The presence of the tree and the abuse she thinks she is suffering from gives her strength and power back. She does not care about her permanent illnesses, about the neglected land or about the social changes she is witnessing, she only cares about her chocho vine. The tree symbolises her inner self. She identifies herself with it and

harming the vine is like harming her own personality. It also stands for better times and represents her strong beliefs and standards. Therefore, it cannot be desecrated. It is sacred for her, the same her ideals are. She does not like neither the Rasta men nor the way they live; yet, she respects them unless they profane what is sacred for her: her vine as the vivid representation of what she used to be and of her principles in life. She was not quarrelsome when her boys left but cannot stand anybody touching her chocho vine.

From being weak and tired she becomes strong again and decides to protect not only her chocho vine but also her land and the standards she believes in. The tree and the land is hers and she does not care about the changes in the country and about the influent Rasta next door. She decides to take action the same she used to do when she was younger, even though nobody believes the issue requires great struggle. Yet, for Miss Evadney it is not only a tree, but her tree, her life, the symbol of a better life and position, her pride and her property. Not even Miss Vie supports her on that:

> "Miss Evadney, I know just how you feel," Miss Vie had said. "I know it's aggravation. But it's not like the first time, you know. You have to be careful how you deal with everybody these days. Those people not good people to quarrel with, form what I hear. It would be better if you just leave them to take the chocho" (Senior 1995: 150).

Miss Vie wants to protect the old lady. But she does not care about her own security if it is at the expense of deceiving herself and her ideals. So, she guards the tree day and night until she is exhausted surrounded by stones to throw them in case someone gets close to her vine, herself, her identity and her life. Without knowing, Miss Evadney is accepting the old rule, the Empire and its principles. Born a colonised subject, she is not able to see things in a different way. She assumed her role within the British rule and cannot move forward.

> One day, as she sat under the arbour with her pile of stones as usual, she saw the young men moving around the yard, heard them talking, heard the bad words

> they flung about, caught the smell of ganja on the wind. But no one came near the fence. No one attempted to pick chocho. The next day it was the same. After the third day of this she felt she had won a victory and, confident that she had finally put the chocho thieves in their place, she slept soundly for the first time in weeks (Senior 1995: 153).

Miss Evadney thinks she has won the war. Her struggle to defend what she considers belongs to her from the menace of the new neighbours has been successful. She falls asleep with the feeling of having left a problem aside. Yet, her sleep marks the end of something and the beginning of something new. When she wakes up she finds out that the vine is not as it used to. Little by little the tree starts to look bad and seems "droopy and disheartened". She waters it but the vine continues to wilt. Miss Vie comes to check why the vine is drying out. Miss Vie examines the chocho carefully from every angle. She leans a ladder against the mango tree to take a look at the vine from there. It is then when she sees that the vine has been cut and sliced right through with a machete. Miss Evadney realises there is something wrong when she sees Miss Vie stand still looking at the vine.

> In that moment of recognition, Miss Evadney audibly caught her breath and felt the stillness enter and possess her own body, emptying her of anger, of memory, of desire…"Well the thing about the chocho now" Miss Evadney heard herself saying, "the thing about chocho now", she said again and kept on saying long after Miss Vie had climbed back down the ladder to find her trembling and wordless (Senior 1995: 154).

Finally, the Rasta men next door decide to take action as well. They kill the tree, as a symbol of the end of an era and the beginning of a new one. As the vine dies Miss Evadney loses her confidence and strength again. When she discovers what they have done to the vine, she loses her voice. Miss Edvaney's voice is crucial in the story: both because it is through her voice that readers get the story and because she is almost the only survivor of a generation that lived the final years of colonisation and witnessed the past of the country:

> Not that Miss Evadney had much of an audience these days since she had outlived all her contemporaries and most of the younger generation had migrated to more prosperous locations…To them she was almost mythical, she was old, and could always be relied upon to give the "true version" of events whenever an argument arose or someone failed to remember things that happened in the past. Despite her physical infirmities, Miss Evadney still had a wonderful memory (Senior 1995: 137).

Miss Vie and her family trust her as a reliable witness of the past, as someone who can recast past events and tell them as they were. The loss of her voice marks the death of the old order, of the burden of the past and the beginning of a new one that tries to forget the past in order to move on to what they consider a more fruitful future. Miss Evadney represents colonisation and tradition. By killing her voice, the Rasta men succeed in keeping the past aside so as to begin anew. This reaction symbolises how Jamaicans break with its colonised past and finally are owners of their own destiny: their land is theirs again. They are embracing the new gained freedom actively, leaving aside the old symbols of subjugation and belonging. They attempt to change the ideals of the country to finally emancipate from the mental subdued they lived in.

After having stated the most outstanding notions regarding the theory of historiographic metafiction as a manner of intertextually revisiting the past, I have shown how the two authors under comparative study are clear examples of the use of this technique. In other words, I illustrate how the two authors based their short stories on historical subtexts, how they have subverted and transformed adjusting them to their perspectives as women and formerly colonised subjects. Postmodernism/ Postcolonialism discourses lead me to provide an *ad hoc* interpretation of its main insights. Both authors incorporate in their writings the most outstanding elements of the folklore and cultural tradition of native Jamaicans. These writers endeavour to provide their readers with hints of their Caribbean roots as well as the new cultural elements incorporated during colonisation. I have explored them as cultural translations of a

concrete period of the history of the Jamaica. After having briefly detailed what the most noteworthy elements borrowed from historical archival documents are, I concentrated my discussion on the primary dissimilitude between the short stories and its historical subtext; firstly, I have written about how the two authors have disrupted the historical representations embedded in certain historical documents by fashioning a positive space for their protagonists by giving them the opportunity as the representatives of many postcolonial subjects to provide their readers with a total different interpretation of the events narrated in the official records of history. Secondly, I have evaluated how Cliff and Senior have transmigrated real people and re-organized the action around them. Two intertexts in conflict exist in the texts; the official historical accounts and the new set of features the authors have brought in so as to obtain the desired critical result.

Chapter Five: Caribbean Madness and Inarticulate Voices in: "The Case Against the Queen" and "You Think I Mad, Miss?" by Olive Senior.

In this chapter two stories by Olive Senior are analysed. Both stories are told by young, inarticulate and insecure women. Senior questions the way patriarchy has traditionally considered female versions of events as unreliable and incomplete. Ironically, she appropriates these voices to empower women as autonomous and trustworthy. Olive Senior's "You Think I Mad, Miss?" tells the story of Isabella Francina Myrtella Jones and her inner self. Madness is its main subject. The very title of the story encourages us to reflect upon mental diseases, the different factors that produce them and their consequences, and what is most important, the thin line that sometimes exists between being mentally damaged and being coherent. What produces madness? Are certain types of 'insanity' simply just different ways of constructing reality? Are they real in any way or another? Can these different realities co-exist? Do actual events prompt us into a parallel reality created by ourselves? Can madness be used as a weapon against those who do not fit in our social constraints?

Like every other story in this volume by Olive Senior, "You Think I Mad, Miss?" is set in Jamaica, in a city called Sheraton. This city, though, could be like any other and it provides shelter for the protagonist. The story portrays a series of feelings and thoughts presented by a first person narrator in the form of an inner dialogue. A female narrator addresses questions to different people with whom we are not acquainted, and narrates the story from her point of view. This is the only voice with which we are provided. This fact addresses issues of authorship and narration styles.

One of the questions that emerge after reading this short story is whether the protagonist is really suffering from mental damage and if the story she is telling us is true. Before one reaches the last section of the story, the reader sides with the idea that

the female main character is completely crazy. Her discourse until this final section is a fragmented one that lacks coherence. Yet, is this story one of madness or one of lucidness? Senior's audience has to read between the lines in order to construct the protagonist's story and to be able to discern if everything is in her mind or if it belongs to her actual past. It is quite common to talk about "Caribbean madness" when native subjects attempt to cope with the idea of belonging to two different cultures and the influence of both in them. Saint Lucian-Trinidadian and Nobel Prize in Literature winner, Derek Walcott, considers Caribbean writers to be "literate, healthily schizophrenic, and insightful" (Burnett 2000: 25). Walcott's central preoccupation has concerned the union between two racial and social strains that have produced the unique Caribbean culture. He has worked from the "schizophrenic" point of view of an islander raised to respect and appreciate the culture of an enslaving colonial force. Walcott asserts that the task of writing is that of "creative schizophrenia", because Caribbean writers must articulate a plural identity. They need to cope with the past culture of their African ancestors and the imposed culture of the British conqueror (Burnett 2000: 26). In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Walcott employs the metaphor of a broken vase to explain the situation of the Caribbean: for him, the gathering and fitting of all the pieces constitute the restoration of Caribbean art.

"The Case against the Queen", also by Olive Senior, is told by a third person narrator. A girl tells us the story of her uncle Sonny. Girlie explains the life of her family in Jamaica. Her grandparents raised her after her mother had died giving birth. She also has an uncle who came back from England after having spent several years there. Her uncle left Jamaica to study in order to become a doctor in England, but he never finished his studies. In England he married and had children. Yet, his life in Britain constitutes a void for the whole family. They never knew in detail what had

happened to him there. They only know that he had a wife, because she sent them a letter telling them he was ill in hospital, and they were also conscious of the fact that he never sent them gifts or money like the other Jamaicans who went to England used to do. One day another letter from the uncle's wife arrived: he was coming back to Jamaica because she could not take care of him anymore. When he came back he was a totally different person. He seemed to behave strangely and his only belongings after twenty years were a suit, some toiletries and a locked trunk. People around him called him mad and mocked him.

The whole story is narrated by this man's niece. She is the only voice we get: that of a teenager who suddenly has to confront her uncle's strange behaviour. All readers get is her perception and what she listens to by eavesdropping on her grandparents' conversations in the close-by bedroom. This fact addresses issues of authorship and narration preferences. This prompts readers to analyse the principal techniques employed by the author to present the events, as well as matters regarding narrative voice and structure. Is this girl a reliable narrator? Here the narrator acts as a manipulative agent who tries to make readers aware of the way she perceived things when they happen but at the same time knows the story, all the details, how it starts and how it ends, what the consequences are and how the characters behaved when they had to deal with certain situations. The narrator knows perfectly well what her uncle did on his walk and even what her grandparents' friends talked about in the bar. At first, the narrator describes how her uncle dressed up and went for a walk. Then she describes this scene saying that she is sure of it even though she is not there:

> Ramrod stiff, Uncle would walk down the three concrete steps onto the path to the road, never missing a beat, behaving exactly, I was sure, as if he were going for a walk in Piccadilly Circus (Senior 1995: 38).

Everything seems to be pure conjecture because she is not present; yet, she is providing us with a careful and detailed description of specific aspects of his walk:

> None of this seemed to bother Uncle. He would step into the road, swinging his cane, heedless of what the sharp rocks were doing to his highly polished English shoes or of the dust from the marl clinging to his clothes (Senior 1995: 39).

She is even talking about what her uncle may have felt about the road not having pavement. She is telling us what he would do, imagining the whole scene. Everything seems to be in her mind. Therefore, is the narrator a reliable one? Does she give us enough information so as to complete the story? Are we biased by our own personal experiences and knowledge? The narrator knows everything and apparently remains an outsider; she is voluntarily establishing distance between the time in which the events occur and the time in which she relays the story to us. She is telling us something that occurred a long time ago, when she was just a girl, and she knows exactly how everything would end, because it belongs to her past.

The story finishes with her coming back home after having studied abroad for several years when both her grandparents are dead and her uncle still lives in the house:

> As soon as I qualified and returned home, I headed for the country to look for Uncle, not even bothering to warn him of my arrival. As I neared the house I braced myself for the worst, but I was surprised to find when I got there that, in some subtle and undefined way, the house no longer seemed as empty and cold as it had been when I left (Senior 1995: 55).

The narrator remembers perfectly well how she felt and her perception of events. She even tells us what she was expecting before she arrived and what she finally found, breaking our expectations while reading. Yet, this whole process constitutes a further manipulation of the reader. At times, the reader appears to know more than the characters. Apparently, the narrator manages to control every thought, word and action of the characters so as to involve the reader in the story; but, up to what point are

readers controlled, too? Can these female voices be trusted, or has patriarchy created a collective conscience on the contrary?

"You Think I Mad, Miss?" is divided into several sections in which this narrator intertwines her own thoughts and addresses the passers-by in the street with different questions. At the very beginning she says she lives in the street. In her discourse she mixes her present situation with circumstances from her past. One second she is asking someone in the street to give her money or food and the next second she is thinking out loud about people and things that have already happened. Until the last portion, readers get a fragmented discourse that scrutinizes different issues such as the construction of her language in relation to her social position. The language of the narrator reflects the inner mind of an apparently mad woman. Yet, in the last section, we come across a well-organised discourse full of order and coherence. Providing this fact, are we dealing with a contradiction? In the end, is the narrator breaking with our expectations? Is she reliable? Is madness a social construction? Does it apply to subjects who deviate from the path?

Readers find themselves confused with the narrative voice. While the voice of the woman in the street is that of a mad person, the voice we hear when we are inside her mind is that of a completely lucid person. The Isabella of the street is someone without a stable identity. She is someone who lives alienated because of being unable to identify herself as an individual. She lives in the margins of society, as someone undesirable, as someone rejected by society. Her thoughts, though, are those of someone who can perfectly organise her discourse and with a marked identity. Therefore, the story oscillates between the two voices. By interpreting and mixing them, readers are able to find out the different factors of her past life, which have carried her to her actual desperate situation. It is as if a manipulative agent was trying to create a

sense of confusion in order to portray the fragmented self of the main character, who, without the recognition of her society, remains in a liminal situation that makes her unable to tell her story as she has lived it.

In the first section, she clearly explains her situation in the present time of the story. Her home is Sheraton, the city and her streets. She begs for money at Lady Musgrave Road traffic lights and sleeps in boxes:

> Don't I look like a teacher? Say what? Say why I living on street then? Then is who tell you I living on street? See here, is Sheraton I live. All them box and carochies there on the roadside? Well, I have to whisper and tell you this for I don't want the breeze to catch it. You see the wappen-bappen on the streetside there? Is one old lady ask me to watch it for her till she come back. And cause my heart so good, me say yes. I watch it day and night though is Sheraton I live (Senior 1995: 75).

But, what has driven her to this situation? After having read this, readers are prompted to discover the real cause of her downfall. The type of discourse employed does not correspond to a teacher's, a profession that she claims to have. The contradiction of living on the street and being a teacher creates confusion among the readers who want to know more and are actively involved in the building up of the story. The subsequent sections introduce characters and events without following neither a chronological nor a logical order. This fact helps the narrator create a playful interaction between the reader and the text; the narrator gives information little by little in order to fragment the character's discourse and this is reflected in the structure of the story, which follows the same pattern.

In section two, the main character talks to one of the men who is waiting for the green light on the corner of the street. She is telling him her story when the man rolls up the car window and turns away his head:

> I hope you don't hear already, Sar, what that foolish Doctor Bartholomew saying about me all over town? Is him should lock up in Bellevue and the people inside there set free, you know. But he couldn't keep me lock for I smarter than all of them. That's what Teacher used to tell me… A why you a wind up yu window and mek up yu face? You know is Isabella Francina Myrtella Jones this you a talk to? And since when duttybwoy like you think you can eggs-up so talk to Miss Catherine daughter that studying to turn teacher?… I know you see me all right for,…Would like to drag me down, drag me right down to your level…From I see you drive up I shoulda know she is that Bartholomew send you. Send you to torment me. You ugly just like him, to rah. Go well! (Senior 1995: 76).

The narrator presents other important issues in the story: obsession and the ghosts of her memory. She is obsessed with the doctor following her and spying on her. Her memory is at work. It is as if her life stopped at a certain point and little by little the characters present at that juncture haunt her as ghosts. Apart from the doctor, other characters appear and the reader starts making connections. Isabella is stuck in the past and cannot evolve.

One can infer from her words that she must have spent some time in a mental asylum. What is not clear enough is whether she escaped from there or not. This creates certain expectations on the part of the reader that clearly begin to intervene actively in the story so as to be able to link parts of it as if it were a puzzle, all the details of her past in order to understand her present. She feels persecuted. She believes everybody is there to harm her and that the rest of the world has created a kind of plot to keep her quiet. Isabella feels as if she must hide her identity to be safe. Dressed as a homeless person, the former teacher can remain unrecognisable and therefore, protected. She needs to hide herself from Doctor Bartholomew and the men who are trying to lock her back up. The reader only sees people in the traffic light turning their faces not to give her money. She believes that in her box nobody can find her, by avoiding visual contact she prevents herself from being seen:

> But he will never find me. You want to know why? You see that box there a roadside? Is there I hide, you know. Once I get in my box, not a living soul can find me. They could send out one million policemen to search for me. Two million soldier. The whole Salvation Army. They could look into the box till they turn fool (Senior 1995: 78).

In their classical study, *The Madwoman in the Attic*, Gilbert and Gubar (1979: 85) talk about the different dramatizations of imprisonment and escape in literature by women. Apart from buildings, they find ladylike veils, mirrors, paintings, statues, strong boxes and other domestic furnishing as means to signify the confinement of women as it is portrayed in novels of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Senior's story we have both the building and the boxes that serve as shelter in the street. Both elements are used in order to portray the protagonist's sense of confinement. Her life has been framed and reduced to boxes and before it was reduced to the walls of the asylum. Gilbert and Gubar (1979: 85) posit that this imagery in literature, especially when written by women, help female authors to enact their desire to maintain themselves in the process of creativity. By escaping from these boundaries, they argue, they are escaping male construction and male texts. This doubling of imprisonment and escape gives the female author the possibility of enacting her own desire to escape both male houses and texts, as well as articulating for herself the anger repressed within these symbols (1979: 85).

At this point in the story the reader really wonders if everything might be in Isabella's mind; if the whole story is constructed upon pure imagination. One begins to think if the narrator's confused mind is fabricating the entire story and if she may suffer from paranoia or schizophrenia. These two diseases are characterised by the patient's creation of a parallel reality, which only they can experience. Are all the characters and events mere constructions of the narrator? Is hers a reliable voice? There are two subtexts in tension in the story; the version Isabella has created in her mind and considers to be true; and then the main character's building up of the story in her

damaged mind as a consequence of her mental disease. The thing is that both are real for her, even if the story's characters are invented, because they really exist in her mind. There are two different realities crashing with one another: what Isabella has in her mind and the reality the rest of us see.

Section three of the story is devoted to a kind of dialogue between Isabella and her mother. She speaks for both and imagines or reproduces a dialogue between the two. Isabella inquires as to who has taken her baby daughter. It is the first time in which she addresses her mother and we learn about the child. As the passage develops she changes the addressee from her mother to her daughter. The three of them know the truth. Consanguinity is a determining factor here; blood ties link them all. In all the stories of *Discerner of Hearts*, Senior works out female ties, the connections that link women from different generations. She develops a female world in which women are the main agents in developing their own lives and the lives of the women around them. Even in this one, Isabella is struggling to own and write her own story. She blames her mother for having abandoned her. Apparently, her mother felt deceived by her because she did exactly what she was told not to do. Yet, has her mother abandoned her or is she herself the one who has broken the tie with her because of her guilt? Isabella hints that she feels guilty because she may have disappointed her mother, who was always warning her about men such as Jimmy Watson. She has lost familial ties on both sides; her ascendant and her descendent links, her past and her future female projections. As a mother she cannot understand why her own mother has left her. But, does her mother know she is in the street and homeless, or is she simply thinking she has lost her forever?

She remembers her daughter and wonders how she is. She talks to her in her dreams, in her mind, and she feels how this bond has been broken. It is as if a part of her

had been lost forever. It is in this third section where Isabella hints that someone called Elfraida Campbell took away her child. She was involved with Jimmy Watson and according to Isabella, both Elfraida and her mother performed *obeah* on her, took her baby, and provoked her downfall:

> Is bad-minded people make them take her away. Thank you, Mother. God bless you and the little darling. Say who take her? Well me have to whisper it for me don't want the breeze to catch it. But is that Elfraida Campbell, that's who. The one that did say me did grudge her Jimmy Watson. Then you nuh remember her? Is she and her mother burn bad candle for me mek me buck mi foot and fall. For I never had those intentions. No such intentions. Is two slip I wear under my skirt for I was studying to be teacher. Is Miss Catherine my mother, you know. Say the light changing? You gone? God bless you, my precious daughter (Senior 1995: 77).

As the story develops, the reader manages to build up all the events that have occurred. In the fourth section the author introduces Jimmy Watson. After having talked with her mother about the incident with Elfraida and her mother, Isabella talks about the sexual intercourse she had with Jimmy Watson for the first time. She explains that she did not originally have such intentions. This statement and the idea that she was trying to stay pure because she was trying to become a teacher, can imply two different things: that she was in love with Jimmy Watson and finally she fell into his arms, or that she was forced to have sexual relations with him against her will. Later on in the story, Isabella says that it was not her intention to sleep with him in order to get her certification. Maybe she is implying that there was some kind of sexual harassment involved:

> Say who is Jimmy Watson? …The same Jimmy Watson that did come as the assistant teacher and all the girls did love him off. Well, not me. For I didn't have no intention to take on young man before I get certification (1995: 77).

This man is the one who, later in the story, readers discover makes her lose her mind. In the quotation we also get a hint of the circumstances under which they meet. Isabella is studying to become a teacher. Her life is based on that. For her to become a teacher is the only way of achieving a better social status and autonomy. She blames Jimmy for

having taken her off this path. She feels she was driven out with passion; it is this this passion what has unbalanced her situation. It is possible that she was sexually harassed by Jimmy Watson in order to get what she wanted: her certification. She swings from being resolute about her absence of feelings towards him to then admitting his charm. Yet, at certain points in the story it seems as if she was even forced to maintain sexual relations with him. One may ask, to what degree was she forced? Does her own passion and desire force herself into the sexual intercourse? Does she feel guilty for having left her studies and having lied with someone else's lover? Has she been raped? These questions remained unanswered until the end of the story because of the inarticulate discourse of the narrator. Moreover, even once readers have been capable of establishing a chronological order of events, the story remains open-ended as we can only get the perspective of Isabella. By using a theoretically unreliable narrator, Senior is keeping up the suspense and the idea of fragmentation until the end.

In the subsequent sections, from five to eight, one manages to put all the details of her story together. There is a love triangle between Elfraida, Jimmy and Isabella that triggers all the conflict. In section four, Isabella warns a young lady of the dangers of love and sex. She tells her to marry before having sex with a man because her experience tells her that if they get what they want before marrying they will simply forget about their compromise. This is what happened to her with Jimmy Watson. She explains to her that he came as the assistant teacher and all the girls fell madly in love with him. She did not have any intention of being with anybody before she got her certification. She again mixes her experiences with comments on the present situation: "then you just wind up yu window and drive off so?" (Senior 1995: 78).

In section five, it is relevant how Isabella introduces *obeah,* or black magic, as one of the causes for her isolation and present situation. According to Isabella, Elfraida

Campbell and her mother put *obeah* on her and this is why she has been cast aside and isolated. For her this is the reason why her life has been derailed, and why nobody believes her account of it. In the next section, she reflects on how Satan sets "plenty of snares for the innocent" in order to prove their goodness. She talks about Jimmy Watson as if he were Satan himself. She narrates how he, in spite of her resistance, convinced her with evil tricks to have an affair with him. He uses his knowledge and book-learning to trap her. Isabella worries about her reputation and her studies, but he manages to make her forget all this out of blind passion.

In section seven, she continues relating the way Satan has sent all these circumstances to torment her. Jimmy and especially Doctor Bartholomew represent evilness and are the agents behind her misfortune: "Satan and Bartholomew are one and the same" (Senior 1995: 79). According to her, they both lied about her baby and took her away in order to protect their own reputations. They said she was crazy and isolate her. The fact that the doctor is called Bartholomew is clearly intentional: one of the most infamous psychiatric facilities for women suffering from apparent mental diseases during the nineteenth century in the UK was St Bartholomew Hospital. Elaine Showalter explains in *The Female Malady* (1987) that hundreds of women were diagnosed as hysterical and confined in these asylums. According to her, they were considered "personally and morally repulsive. Idle, intractable, and manipulative" (Showalter 1987:133).

Isabella's apparent madness may have been caused by having had her baby taken away from her, rather than caused by Jimmy's love. They banish her from a society that judges and punishes women more harshly than men. Pretending she is mad, they are simply projecting their guilt on her. She had become an obstacle for their good standing in society. Her isolation, first in an asylum, and then alone on the streets with

no protection or support, gives them the opportunity of hiding their culpability and maintaining their control of others. Jimmy is a teacher and Bartholomew is a doctor, both are at the culprit of society and have the situation under control. Showalter explains how women who deviated from 'lady-like' behaviour were severely punished in these institutions and deemed as hysterical or schizophrenic. They were then subjected to confinement and excessive treatments with insulin to provoke comas, or even lobotomies as the only ways of remanding them back to the role assigned to them by patriarchal ideals (Showalter 1987: 210). Showalter expresses her concerns on the role of doctors and institutions in these cases:

> The doctors, the demons, and the fathers begin to sound alike; their voices merge in a chorus of condemnation…schizophrenic symptoms of passivity, depersonalization, disembodiment, and fragmentation have parallels in the social situation of women (Showalter 1987: 213).

Showalter maintains that schizophrenia can be inferred as "the perfect literary metaphor for the female condition" as it justifies women's lack of confidence and dependency on their male relatives or the masculinity represented in certain institutions, which creates a perpetual sense of fragmentation of the self and vulnerability. In Senior's story, Isabella is a victim of the need of patriarchal institutions to silence women so as to subject them. Showalter states that the literary criticism by the early 1960s onwards has attempted to reclaim these women as victims and heroines rather than only violent, sexually unstable and irrational beings (Showalter 1987: 219).

The two men are constructing their reality and hiding the truth, and consequently, Isabella's version. By isolating her, they are clearly banning her perspective and making theirs the only possible truth. Isabella talks about God as her only witness for she swears everything she tells us is true. Yet, how can it be proven when it has been hidden and banned by patriarchy? In many texts by women, figures

such as doctors, fathers, lovers, and institutions ruled by men, are considered symbols of patriarchy and of women's oppression. For example, in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*, it is Mr Rochester who locks up his wife, Antoinette, in the attic, arguing that she is mad, just because he does not love her and she is an obstacle in his developing the life he wants to lead. Gilbert and Gubar (1979: 193) explain how both Charlotte Brontë and Virginia Woolf clearly attack the "patriarchal Miltonic cosmology" and the misogynistic context in his works: Woolf, excluding Milton in both *Orlando* and *Between the Acts*, two ambitious and feminist revisions of history; and Brontë, in *Shirley*.

Feminist Mexican Scholar, Marcela Lagarde, has been studying the position of women in society since the 1980s. In her PhD thesis, *Entrapped women: wife-mothers, nuns, whores, prisoners and the insane* (published in Spanish as: *Cautiverios de las mujeres: madresposas, monjas, putas, presas y locas*), Lagarde states that her main purpose was that of analysing women's oppression from an anthropological perspective: "It is about pain, fear, impotence, servitude and other things that are aimed at entrapping women, who are captives in a patriarchal world." (my translation for this Thesis, 1989: 15). She asserts that women are considered inferior to men and are automatically discriminated against, by being removed from powerful positions in society with the end of perpetuating the image of women as impure, immature, inept and incomplete. She argues that this discrimination is only possible if the condition of historical subject is compromised by other empowered subjects. It has systematically been done to women by expropriating our sexuality, bodies, and goods and according to Lagarde, especially by usurping any possibility of us having positions of authority in this world (Lagarde 1989: 16). This is precisely what colonising powers did within their invaded

territories; assume a paternalistic role of protection while the colonised subject was excluded from making any decision in regards their existence and social role.

Lagarde claims that female subjectivity is built upon the dependent relationships they establish with others in society. Being dependent and submissive are traits that are considered attributes of femininity. For Lagarde, women's conscience has been created upon a lie: that they are conformed in their fusion with others and by establishing these links they supposedly find social recognition. The role adopted by most women, therefore, contributes to patriarchal gain, in that society obliges women to take care of others, to remain silent, and in most cases, by what appears to be their own desire:

> This net of oppressive phenomena articulated by means of expropriation, inferiority, discrimination, dependence and subordination, define sexuality, activities, work, social relationships, ways of participation in the world and women's culture. And they also define the limits of their possibilities in life (Lagarde 1989:17).

The way in which these oppressive behaviours are performed and concocted is what Lagarde develops in this piece; and, it is precisely these oppressive behaviours and their consequences that she defines as "captivities". She adds that oppression helps patriarchal society to objectify women. To establish links with others, women assume the reification of their sexuality, the denial of intelligence and their inferior position in comparison to men.

Elfraida Campbell and her mother follow the patriarchal rule because it situates them in a better position from that they were before. Elfraida looks to improve her social standing by marrying Jimmy Watson. Isabella tried to do it after obtaining her certification, which would have made her autonomous and able to protect herself. Her affair with Jimmy was an obstacle for Elfraida in obtaining her goal. Isabella wonders if Elfraida's *obeah* can be powerful enough to destroy her. She also thinks that maybe

they are simply using their cunning minds and their influence on Jimmy. Isabella wants to be arrested to tell her side of the story in court, an event to which she looks forward. She reflects on the idea of having her own day at court but she wonders whether or not the judge would believe her. She makes a reflection on justice: Does it really exist or is it merely constructed by those who apply it? She doubts that justice can exist for someone like her. Isabella cannot see what her crime has been. She asks herself all these questions and finds herself unable to answer them.

Over the last twenty years, Lagarde has developed the concept of women's autonomy. In her work, *Feminist Keys to the Empowerment and Autonomy of Women* (*Claves Feministas para el Poderío y la Autonomía de las Mujeres*, 1997) based on a series of conferences she gave in 1997 and subsequent years, she establishes the basis for the consecution of female autonomy in our current society. Her proposal of the feminist alternative for autonomy is based on a philosophical concept directed towards freedom; she considers individual freedom of each woman as the philosophical principle of autonomy (Lagarde 1997: 4). She quotes feminist philosopher Hannah Arendt to help explain that freedom cannot be conceived as only an individual process, but also as a historical one. For Lagarde, autonomy may vary if it is understood as individual or collective; there are different levels of autonomy depending on its application to a certain individual or institution (Lagarde 1997: 5). She adds that autonomy is a historical process because it has been considered crucial for the evolution of society and has to be analysed considering individuals independently, but also processes of culture and power, both at a social and a symbolic level. In different historical periods there have been other ways of demanding autonomy, but she makes it clear that the one she proposes is the one derived from the feminist vision in which female freedom is central (Lagarde 1997: 7). Therefore, autonomy is a symbolic fact in

that it is based on language and the way we need it to express our autonomy (Lagarde 1997: 5). The author outlines that autonomy is an important aspect of the transformation of women into historical subjects, and of the consecution of freedom as something women experience not only as a philosophical concept (Lagarde 1997: 63).

Lagarde talks about the double significance of autonomy as something we need to construct and identify with; this has constituted a revolution for women whose identity was traditionally based on their fusion with other people (Lagarde 1997: 6). She adds that women need to face two social elements to be able to create their own subjectivity, both as individuals and as historical and social subjects: omnipotence and impotence (Lagarde 1997: 66). The former is based on the idea that women are supposed to be everywhere where their caring is needed, and then later on the premise that women are considered incapable of making decisions on their own, and therefore always need male supervision. For Lagarde, impotence is learnt, and it permeates and inhibits the development of autonomy (Lagarde 1997: 67). She argues that autonomy is not natural but rather that it is constructed at different levels: by individuals, institutions or movements, and must be social (Lagarde 2012: 169):

> Autonomy is always a social pact. It has to be recognised and socially supported, it has to find operative mechanisms to function. If they do not exist, to proclaim one's identity is not enough because there is no place to exercise it, because the autonomous experience is not possible, nor are individuals, groups, movements, or institutions. Autonomy requires a social ground with indispensable social conditions so that it can develop and be a part of social relations (Lagarde 1997: 7). [5]

[5] La autonomía es siempre un pacto social. Tiene que ser reconocida y apoyada socialmente, tiene que encontrar mecanismos operativos para funcionar. Si no existe esto, no basta la proclama de la propia autonomía porque no hay donde ejercerla, porque no se da la posibilidad de la experiencia autónoma, ni de la persona ni del grupo, del movimiento, o la institución. La autonomía requiere un lecho social, un piso de condiciones sociales imprescindibles para que pueda desenvolverse, desarrollarse y ser parte de las relaciones sociales (1997: 7, my translation for this Thesis).

Apart from being historical, autonomy is based on psychological processes. It is constituted on the individual experience but this experience has to be recognised by society in order to be autonomous and truthful. In the case of the protagonists of Senior's stories, they cannot successfully develop their autonomy because their version of events is not considered reliable. Society does not give them the possibility of exercising their autonomy because they do not give them the power to authorise their own versions. Their voice is silenced by the main powerful institutions, solely for being women. Lagarde also talks about the political scope of autonomy:

> Autonomy is fundamentally a combination of power processes, therefore, it is constituted by vital political processes in what we traditionally called the political sphere…Every advancement in autonomy is a political advancement and requires the re-arrangement of power relations, of politics, and requires a political language because autonomy has to be politically formulated (Lagarde 1997: 13). [6]

This idea implies a power revolution, one that needs changes in the autonomy of women but also in that of men. It has to be directed to transform society. Patriarchy denies this political power to women and situates women who decide not to follow the mainstream or rebel against the role assigned to them by society as psychologically unstable and as outsiders. This point is made clear as both main characters by Senior are under the control of the male representatives of political and patriarchal power. There is a political language that excludes women and therefore their possibility of being autonomous and authorising their own history. The antidote to it is inevitably resistance. Lagarde indicates how women need to resist against subjectivity, and the domination over their bodies, thoughts, actions, etc. By combating cultural and political domination, women

[6] La autonomía es fundamentalmente un conjunto de procesos de poder, por lo tanto se constituye a través de procesos vitales políticos y en lo que tradicionalmente llamamos el ámbito político…Cada avance de autonomía es un avance político y requiere una recomposición de las relaciones de poder, una reconfiguración de la política, y requiere de un lenguaje político pues la autonomía debe ser enunciada políticamente (1997: 13, my translation for this Thesis).

manage to build up autonomy (1997: 75). She analyses how such resistance contributes to the creation of identity:

> Subject construction needs resistance to agree in any attempt to stigmatise women; not to agree in any overrating of men. This combination of process of critical distance of our culture and the defence of the new- at least not assuming it- and the construction of individuality as actresses, gives us the chance to transform ourselves in authors of our own life. Women who are authors as concrete, limited, circumstantial beings, where each subject understands that her life is the most important issue and as protagonist of her life, inventing it, because living our own lives is the most important creation someone can perform (Lagarde 1997: 76). [7]

For the main characters in these stories, it is important for them to create their own subjectivity in order to be able to build up their own life under any circumstance without been stigmatised as crazy, unreliable or unstable. Patriarchy stereotypes all women as identical, because it provides them with a certain role. In order to avoid being all boxed together, women need to challenge and resist gender traditional social constructions, thus, recognising that there is a gender positive similarity with other women. This similarity also needs to be de-constructed because it is not natural. Lagarde (1997: 44) thinks that difference is crucial for autonomy because subjectivity construction is impossible if we do not think of ourselves as related to others. This fact makes it difficult for Senior's female characters to create their subjectivity, since they are isolated. Their version of the story does not fulfil the expectations of society and therefore, they are left in isolation. Their resistance to the traditional role ascribed to them by society helps them articulate their story and self-create themselves.

[7] La construcción del sujeto pasa por la resistencia a dar consenso a cualquier intento de estigmatizar a las mujeres; por no dar consentimiento a ninguna sobrevaloración de los hombres. Este conjunto de procesos de distanciamiento crítico de la propia cultura y defensa de la nueva –por lo menos no acatándola- y la construcción de la individualidad como actoras, nos permite convertirnos en autoras de lo que vamos viviendo. Mujeres autoras a la medida de seres concretos, limitados, circunstanciados, donde cada sujeto asume que su vida es el asunto más importante y que protagoniza su vida, la inventa, pues la vigencia de la vida propia es la creación más importante que alguien pueda hacer.(1997: 76, my translation for this Thesis).

In the last section of the story, the female narrator changes her discourse completely. She seems to have finally developed her autonomy and appears to be empowered for the first time. She starts following the same fragmented structure of the previous sections. She addresses the people stopping in the traffic light and asks them for money. When a woman winds up the window of her car Isabella reacts in a violent way:

> Good day, Missis. You did say you want to hear my question. Well, beg you a money there nuh, please. I don't get a thing to eat from morning. Thank you, Miss. You want to hear my question, please? So why you winding up yu glass? Why you unmannersable so? Well, whether you want to hear or not, you stupid bitch, I, Isabella Francina Myrtella Jones, am going to tell you. I going to shout it from Lady Musgrave Road traffic light. I going to make the breeze take it to the four corners of everywhere (Senior 1995: 82).

This circumstance has a catalytic effect. As if something were switched on in her mind, Isabella begins to organise her discourse in a cohesive and coherent way. She departs from her previous discourse and shifts into a more organised one that everybody can understand. She is going to shout out the truth. She poses different questions to the people in the street. Yet, who is she addressing in reality? She wants justice. She numbers her questions to provide us with the most coherent possible discourse.

Recalling again "The Case against the Queen", that has been analysed above, the narrative follows a pattern that may seem to involve readers fully as builders of the story; yet, information is only given as the narrator pleases, or when it is required. Therefore, the reader needs to fill in all those gaps in the story that are left incomplete and never as they wish, but rather, at the whim of the narrator. In this story this is well achieved every time the narrator gives us hints of the time in which her uncle was in England. Nobody except him knows what has happened while he was there. Therefore, the narrator has to avoid this part of the story; because from her perspective the only thing that happened is that he went there and got ill. This strategy transforms the

narrative into something open and with plenty of different interpretations. In addition, the readers' knowledge plays an important role, too; the narrator takes for granted that the readers' experience and life knowledge will play an important role in interpreting certain events. We are already biased and the narrator knows it. This is the reason they choose how and when to give us the information. Like in "You Think I Mad, Miss?" the events are told by a young woman. Inevitably her capability of authorising the truth of the story is questioned. As Lagarde claims in her work, patriarchy systematically doubts women's versions of facts. In this case the fact that she was not a witness of the events embeds this issue. Society perceives the story as that of a crazy man told by a woman, and instantly applies traditional roles and social circumstances to build up a story that fits patriarchy. The grandfather is the icon of this idea. In this story the roles are changed, a woman, The Queen, represents the institution of patriarchy and the Empire, whereas a man is the representative of the colonised subject and his mental instability puts him closer to those isolated, such as women.

In "The Case against the Queen" we only get the girl's perspective, we only know about how during that time her grandparents were always showing off because their son went to England to become a doctor:

> Grampa was extraordinarily proud of his son because while everyone had sons or daughters overseas they were always bragging about, his son was the one with the brains, he had been saying that for twenty years, the one who was always studying...Uncle had left to study medicine (Senior 1995: 44).

Sonny has left Jamaica to become a doctor. In many texts by women, figures such as doctors, fathers, lovers and institutions ruled by men are considered symbols of patriarchy and of women's oppression. He goes to England to become a doctor and include himself within the boundaries of patriarchy. By becoming a doctor he will represent law, order and the Empire too. He will become a part of the establishment:

> "He did always want to succeed. From he was little he would tell me, 'Mamie, I am going to be a doctor. I am going to be a big important man. Going to make you and Papa proud of me" (Senior 1995: 48).

He never finishes his studies and therefore cannot claim to be a part of this system. This has probably created a sense of loss and Sonny has become a fragmented person. In England he does not belong to the establishment and stands as the other. He cannot develop his free will and suffers from a personal crisis.

After twenty years abroad, the Uncle comes back to Jamaica. During this time there was a great lapse of contact between him and his family. He never tells them what happened there in detail. Sonny only gives brief accounts of his life in England to his niece, so all the information he provides is full of gaps:

> "This is my case. My case that I have been preparing for years now, all my life. Six million pounds in damages I am claiming. Don't you thinks I am owed compensation? I and my children and my children's children? I never wanted to go into that hospital, Girlie. They dragged me in there. Kidnapped me, you have to say. Inflicted indignity and disfigurement on my person. Took out my heart and put in a mechanical one. And you know why, Girlie?" (Senior 1995: 53).

He is always talking about his illness and how they operated on him and changed his heart. Apparently he has been preparing his case against the hospital for a long time and nobody had previously paid attention to him. His situation back in Jamaica and his obsession with this particular occurrence in his life encourage us to reflect upon mental diseases, the different factors that produce them and their consequences, and what is more important, about the thin line that sometimes exists between being mentally damaged and being coherent. According to Uncle, he was taken to a hospital back in England where they took his heart out and replaced it with a mechanical device. He was never asked, according to his version, if he wanted to have this operation. It seems that after it, he was never the same person. Yet, as no one else talks about it or knows for sure what happened, besides his niece, whose voice we do hear, it is impossible to

verify the truth of the story. Readers find it difficult to know whether he is telling the truth or if he is inventing the story. While reading the text, one wonders about the main causes that produce insanity. Certain types of madness can be reckoned simply as different ways of perceiving reality, as everyone constructs their own, in one way or another. Can these different realities co-exist? Current happenings in our lives may prompt us into a parallel reality created by ourselves. In a sense, madness can be used as a weapon against those who do not fit into the mould of what is socially acceptable.

One of the questions that emerge after reading this short story is whether or not one of the protagonists is suffering from a mental illness, or if everything he tells us is actually true. The reader sides with the idea that Sonny is completely crazy. He behaves strangely, for example, he never changes his suit from the day of his arrival, and he never really talks to anybody, besides saying hello to passers-by. The man behaves as if he were still in London; he never wears appropriate clothes for tropical weather. Everybody mocks him and his niece suffers the same treatment at school because mental illness is believed to be hereditary. Even the girl's grandmother believes it:

> "Girlie, dear, when you go away to high school you must never ever tell anybody that you have a mad uncle. Never. For they might think you tar with the same brush, you know. Madness can run in the family. Don't ever let anybody know your uncle mad" (Senior 1995: 51).

The fact that Uncle behaves differently and does not comply with Jamaican social norms converts him into a spectacle. At school, everybody knows about Girlie's uncle's condition and she feels trapped and different. She only wants to run away to where no one knows about her family and where she can finally be free. Maybe madness does not run in the family, but it is true that her uncle's madness is already affecting her. She is going to go abroad to study in order to become a doctor. In a way she is frightened that going abroad will transform her into a mad person like her uncle; yet, she cannot stay

because she has already been labelled as his relative and as a possible victim of madness. This is why for her, going abroad means an escape, a new opportunity for being herself and developing her free will without pressure.

Sonny's discourse in the voice of his niece is a shredded one that lacks coherence. Yet, is this story one of madness or one of lucidness? The reader has to read between lines in order to reconstruct the man's story and be able to discern if everything is in his mind or if it actually belongs to his past. The narrator introduces characters and events without following a chronological or logical order. This fact helps the narrator to create a playful interaction between the reader and the text; by giving us information little by little in order to fragment character discourse, this is reflected in the structure of the story, which follows the same pattern.

When Sonny tells his niece his story, readers get hints of what may have happened to him in England. Yet, nobody in his family talks about it, they remain silent as a consequence of the shame from which they seem to suffer. Sonny was someone everyone admired. He studied hard to have the opportunity of becoming a doctor; but when he returns, he is nothing but a mad man to them:

> After a while everyone in the district accepted that Uncle was mad. They stopped calling him "Mister Sonny" and "Doctor" and "Sir", which they called him when he first came. Now he was plain "Sonny" to everyone, including the little children who trail behind him mimicking his stiff-legged gait, his fixed smile (Senior 1995: 50).

His father feels ashamed and disappointed, but no one in the family talks about it. Nobody speaks to each other because they do not want to know any more. It is as if not talking about it means it never happened. The void is still there. Given this fact, are we dealing with a contradiction? The narrator provides us her uncle's version and the opinion of her grandparents, which she gets after listening to them talking in their

bedroom. Yet, is she omitting potentially important information? Is she giving us all the details? In Jamaica, people stereotype the life their relatives and friends carry out abroad. The fact that their son went to England to study and work provides the family with a certain status.

It is very difficult to reproduce all Uncle's words and opinions, and as a consequence, readers get everything skewed. His words, though, are those of someone who can perfectly organise his discourse, and with a marked identity. Therefore, the story oscillates between the two realities. By interpreting and mixing them, readers are able to find out different things from his past, from the years he spent in England. It is as if a manipulative agent was trying to create a sense of confusion in order to portray the distorted self of the character, who does not seem to be accepted by either Jamaican or English society, and therefore remains in a limbo that makes him unable to tell his story as he has lived it.

At the time in which the story takes place, Sonny lives in Jamaica at his parents' house and everybody around him considers him to be an unstable person. The same thing happened to other people around him who had also lived abroad:

> What Grampa said made me think. I started to think of all the people we knew who had gone away and come back. And several that I could think of were what we would call "not righted". Miss Pringle's daughter Gloria came back from the States talking to herself, acting like mad-ants all day long until she went right off her head. And there was Bagman, who was somebody's pickney as he often told us, though everyone had forgotten whose… Mr Robinson had a son in Bellevue who had also gone to England to study and Miss Lor's daughter had killed herself and her two babies there after her husband left her for another lady. Was there something in the atmosphere of foreign, I wondered then, that made people go mad, as Grampa was suggesting? (Senior 1995: 49).

According to the girl's grandfather, everyone who spends time abroad suffers from some kind of mental disease. Within their community there are several examples of this. But, what is it that has put them in this situation? As an adult, Girlie wonders if madness

runs in the family, and if it is true that those who have experienced something different from life on the island have suffered from it. It is paradoxical how off the island all of them have probably felt some kind of entrapment, possibly cultural. They feel isolated in a society that labels them as different. This type of identity crisis has commonly been associated with the Caribbean. In Jamaica, residents live under British rule and feel they belong to the Empire. Yet, when they try to identify themselves with Britain, they have trouble situating themselves within the boundaries imposed by a new situation and culture. They suffer from an identity crisis as a result of their subjugation. These two diseases are characterised by the victim's creation of a parallel reality, which only they can experience. Are all the characters and events mere constructions of the narrator? Is she a reliable voice? There are two subtexts at war in the story; the version Sonny has created in his mind, which is true for him; and, the story the rest of the characters know, which is not clear to us. The thing is that both seem to be real. Even if Uncle has invented everything, the events really exist in his mind. There are two different realities sparring with one another: what Sonny claims to have lived and what the rest see and believe.

As Homi Bhabha points out in his essay "What does the Black man want?" (1987), occupying two different places at once can provoke dislocation in the creation of subjectivity in colonial subjects due to the difficulty they encounter trying to place themselves in one or the other. For Bhabha, colonialism attempts to create a drama out of identity, which causes tension between both meaning and being. He outlines that:

> The symbol of social order- the police, the bugle calls in the barracks, military parades and the waving flags- are not one and the same time inhibitory and stimulating: for they do not convey the message 'Don't dare to budge'; rather, they cry out 'Get ready to attack'.
> It is from that tension- both psychic and political- that a strategy of subversion emerges. It is a mode of negation that seeks not to unveil the fullness of Man but to manipulate his representation (Bhabha 1987: 122-123).

Sonny struggles to identify himself among the colonisers. In Bhabha's words, employing Fanon's idea of society as a masquerade, in which Sonny would be a "white-masked black man", this character has suffered from trauma in relation to his own identity. He argues that the only approach that colonised subjects have to redeem themselves from this cultural confusion is through political subversion (Bhabha 1987: 123). Sonny is obsessed with his heart. It is as if by taking his heart away from him, the doctors have really taken away his identity. His Caribbean heritage seems to have disappeared. He had to adapt to his new situation and this created a sense of loss and fragmentation in his personality. He blames the Queen who is supposed to take care of her subjects. This is why he writes all these letters to her asking her why, in a Royal hospital, he underwent an unwanted surgery. Without his heart he seems to be someone different, he feels different. This is a clear symbol of colonisation. It represents how the colonisers took away the essence, the identity and the soul of the colonised to transform them into their subjects. They replaced his heart with a mechanical device. That way it beats at the rhythm the Empire has imposed on him. By taking the people's hearts and culture away from them, they manage to control them the same way they control the beating of Uncle's heart, and his reaction is a subversive and aggressive one.

Are both stories attempts to question authorship and the creation of texts? In relation to this, several interpretations may emerge. If one analyses the role of the author in texts it can be concluded that this very role is that of creating characters and events out of their imagination. This is precisely what the narrator in every text echoes. Yet, in these stories, several frameworks of textual construction appear. In "You Think I Mad, Miss?" at first we get a narrator contrasting two different textual realities; Isabella homeless in Sheraton, and then her past story. We cannot infer if they are related or whether the events in her past have led to her current circumstances. It is possible that

her situation as someone off the main track of social experience has prompted her into a parallel world with imaginary characters and events. One can easily reach the conclusion that the current situation of the main character and her past are intimately related. Her past can be considered the cause of her current situation in the story. Second, we have the author constructing a character whose story is not at all clear and who apparently is mentally damaged. The author portrays a kind of circumstance in order to be able to demonstrate that events are subjective, just like the confusion created upon certain social constructions.

At the end of "The Case against the Queen", Girlie comes back to Jamaica from studying abroad, to her grandparents' place. There she finds her uncle. He is not wearing his suit anymore. He seems to be very relaxed in his tropical clothes and he looks different. He shows his niece how he has finally opened the trunk he brought from England and released all the papers. He has finally written the whole case against the Queen who had stolen heart. Once he finishes, he spreads the papers around the place and his stiffness disappears. He can finally escape from his entrapment. He can feel free because he has written his story, he has given it a shape and he can live with it.

In these two stories, Senior questions the position of authors and narrators, especially if at a certain point they are not authorised ones. Isabella's version of reality is not valued at all by the people who listen to her. She is marked by gender, race and class. Senior gives voice to a woman who lives in the margins of a society in which status is something valuable. Is she voicing her own worries regarding authorship in this story? Senior authorises Isabella's story. The author is performing her right to construct the story in her own manner and encourage readers to collect the pieces they want so as to provide their personal interpretation. After completing the story, readers wonder to whom the story is being directed. It seems that she is just talking to herself and has no

listeners at all except those reading the story. At the very beginning, she tells us she is homeless and isolated in the streets of Sheraton. Memory works as a means for the development of her identity. She has lost her previous identity and it seems impossible for her to evolve until she is capable of coming to terms with certain experiences from her past that haunt her. The textual construction of identity in the story delineates the difficulties faced by the main character in a society permeated by race, class and gender/sex oppression.

At this point a Lacanian psychoanalytical reading could explain these characters' construction. Lacan, in his theory of the Mirror Stage, states that there is a pre-Oedipal stage in which the child is unable to perceive itself as a separated being from the mother's body. This is the stage of the semiotic where there is no sense of subjectivity and it is associated with the mother. The Oedipal crisis occurs when the child is forced to enter the Symbolic order, a stage linked to the acquisition of language and therefore of the ability see themselves as an independent being. The crisis happens when the father splits up this dyadic unity, which exists between the mother and the child and forbids the child further access to the mother's body. The phallus of the father represents the Law of the Father, and once the child enters into the Symbolic they must accept the phallus as signifier and the Law of the Father as the only way of living in human society. Lacan states that the crossing between the semiotic world of the mother into the Symbolic order of the father happens in the phase he denominates the "mirror stage". The mirror endows the child with a unitary body image separated from that of the mother and therefore lets it develop individually as a subject (Moi 1985: 99). Feminist scholars such as Kristeva, Irigaray and Cixous, have marked how Lacanian approach to the creation of identity suggests that women, lacking the male sexual organs, are always incomplete. They rather tend to centre their relationships on their

mothers. In their writings, these female critics try to signify the difference as positively inclusive rather than exclusive. Focusing on the difference, women can find a common space to express themselves and authorise their histories.

If we analyse the story in this light, we can conclude that Isabella has departed from the semiotic order of the mother in the pre-liminal condition and thus all the values her mother represents, and has introduced herself into the Symbolic order or The Law of the Father, and thus accepting the phallus as the only possible ruler. It is as if Patriarchy, embodied by doctors, teachers and male lovers, had metaphorically broken the union between mother and daughter, forcing the girl's access into the phallic world of the symbolic. Once she is in the Symbolic she begins to form her identity. Yet, she remains linked to her mother, and later to her own daughter. In a sense, Senior is challenging those psychoanalytic theories that favour the separation from the mother in order to independently create the individual's subjectivity. In the end, by rejecting the symbols of patriarchy and male domination, Isabella returns to her mother and the principles she embodies. She desires to be with her. This would be interpreted as a regression from the psychoanalytic point of view. Isabella is always looking to her mother as her female role model. She already has the material to draw upon, both from her mother's life story and from the opportunity it has given her to have a career and thus be financially independent.

The main character leaves aside the semiotic and language of the previous sections and embraces the Syntactic. She gives her discourse form and what in psychoanalytical terms would be symbolic, in order to reach as many hearers as possible. She decides to use the language of Patriarchy to make her argument clear and relevant. To achieve justice and order, she must employ the same language used by the very institutions oppressing her. Isabella tries to authorise her version of reality by using

the language of the society that had banned it. In a different dimension, we can infer the anxiety of the author in order to prove her view of life and fiction. The irony of this rests in how women employ the language that oppresses them in becoming reliable voices and in developing their identities as creative female agents.

An analysis provided by the feminist Marcela Lagarde proves useful in claiming that the language of feminism has to situate women as the centre of their own lives (Lagarde 1997: 61). For her, the first reference is that of self-identity to set women free from other's interfering in their lives. She employs the idea of women becoming agents of their lives to be able to exercise their freedom and their free will even when it is questioned. Lagarde argues that being authors of their lives means that women must have the resources to understand life outside the dominant culture; from a place where oppression and dependence are not legitimate:

> In this sense, a personal biography does not go against our lives, rememory or evoking. It is about seeing one's biography as a basic element in the construction of women as female subjects, it is the possibility of reinterpreting our lives from a different perspective and from different principles. We cannot continue interpreting our lives from the traditional culture, we need a philosophical correspondence between what we can achieve and the resources we have to reinterpret life (Lagarde 1997: 62). [8]

At the end of the story, Senior's female character does not remain passive or voiceless. Isabella tries to write her own biography from outside the traditional discourse. The female impersonation in the narrative voice operates as a literary device to dislocate the pre-conceived ideas about paternity and authority of texts (Warner 1995: 194). Senior is returning to the repressed, to "otherness", as we saw above. Gilbert and

[8] En ese sentido, la biografía personal no es contra nuestra vida o rememorar o evocar. Se trata de ver la biografía como un elemento básico en la construcción de las mujeres como sujetas, es la posibilidad de reinterpretar nuestra vida desde otro enfoque y desde otros valores. No podemos seguir interpretando nuestra vida desde la cultura tradicional, necesitamos que haya una correspondencia filosófica entre lo que nos proponemos alcanzar y los recursos que tenemos para reinterpretar la vida (1997:62, my translation for this Thesis).

Gubar in "The Mad Woman in the Attic" claimed that if pen equals penis, women are excluded from literary creativity (Showalter 1986: 250). Moreover, in her analysis of Dinesen's story "The Blank Page"[9], Gubar gives us an account on women's complications in telling their stories. In "You think I mad, Miss?" Senior suggests that in her essay Gubar explores women as blank pages where patriarchal dominance attempts to inscribe its stories for them, using the blood of their loss of virginity as the ink (Showalter 1986: 300-301). In the second line of the story, Isabella clearly says that she is in the street waiting with notebook and pencil. She wants to write her own story and escape the life that patriarchy has arranged for her. The only way she can do it is by using the very language that is oppressing her, the language of patriarchy. This is why in the last section of the story she embraces the symbolic order, so as to make herself understood. She is no longer a blank page. The fact that she is capable of structuring her discourse and saying it aloud transforms her into someone new, totally different. Senior is portraying the difficulties faced by women to authorise her own stories and remain within the track of creativity.

With "The Case against the Queen", several frameworks of textual construction appear. Firstly, we have the narrator contrasting two different textual realities: Uncle's present madness and past expectations and life. However, are they related? Have the events in his past put him in his current situation? Or, was he perhaps always a social outlier living in a parallel world with imaginary characters and events? His past can be considered the cause of his current situation in the story. Secondly, we have the author

[9]Dinesen's "Blank Page" deals with the special linen sheets nuns in a Portuguese convent wove for the marriage beds of Portuguese princesses. The sheets are displayed the morning after the wedding night framed and with the princesses' name on it, proving the bride's virginity. However there is one piece of linen in the nuns' museum which is a blank page because neither blood nor name appear on it. This sheet offers a great variety of stories as possible (Gubar in Showalter 1986: 292-314).

constructing a character whose story is not at all clear and who apparently is mentally damaged.

The niece's version of reality is not valued at all by the people who listen to her. She is marked by gender, race and class. Is she voicing her own fears regarding authorship in this story? It is obvious that Senior is authorising the girl's story and her right to construct it in her own way, as well as encouraging readers to collect the pieces they want in order to apply their own interpretation. As seen in "You Think I Mad, Miss?" the girl seems to be talking to herself with readers as her only listeners. Memory works as a means of developing of her identity. She is remembering her past as a young woman in order to situate herself both in her community and her current life. The textual construction of identity in the story delineates the difficulties faced by the main character in a society plagued with race, class and gender/sex oppression.

In both stories, the insanity created by the imposition of the language of the conqueror and the acceptance that one's identity is constructed from the perspective of the dominant culture are also tackled. This story questions authorship and the creation of texts. In relation to this, several interpretations may emerge: by analysing the role of the author in texts, it can be concluded that this very role is that of creating characters and events out of one's imagination. This is precisely what is echoed by the narrator in each text.

Gender and sexuality are also central in the conceptualisation of colonial relations. Loomba (1998: 215) points out that across the colonial spectrum, colonised nations are usually regarded as women. The dubbing of a colonial power as "the Motherland" of a colony stems from a wider association of nation with family. Nation equals home, the leaders assume patriarchal roles and citizens are brothers and sisters

(Loomba 1998: 216). Women have responded to these attempts to limit their social scope. For this reason, twentieth century feminist discourse shares many similarities with post-colonial theory and for this reason the two fields have long been thought of as related, even complimentary. Firstly, both discourses are predominantly political and concern themselves with the struggle against oppression and injustice. Moreover, both reject the established hierarchical, patriarchal system, dominated by the hegemonic White male, and both deny the supposed supremacy of masculine power and authority. Imperialism, like patriarchy, is, after all, a phallocentric ideology that subjugates and dominates its subjects in terms of race and gender. The oppressed woman is in this sense is akin to the colonized subject. Essentially, exponents of post-colonialism are reacting against colonialism in the political and economic sense while feminist theorists reject colonialism of a sexual nature. Both women and 'natives' are minority groups, despite being majority in number, and are systematically unfairly defined by the intrusive 'male gaze'[10], which is a characteristic of both patriarchy and colonialism. Sage (Roemer and Bachilega 2001: 68) argues that to exist in the passive case is to be killed. The only solution for this woman to escape from her husband's control is to become active. Carter subversively reverses female passivity in *"The Bloody Chamber"* by creating an active investigating female gaze. Contrary to the original character in Perrault's tale as a helpless, passive heroine whose entering into the forbidden chamber is considered merely an act of frivolous curiosity, Carter's heroine explores the house in order to find evidence of her husband's past and present lives and by doing so, is able to avoid the destiny he had prepared for her. She also disrupts silence as an ideal for

[10] Angela Carter portrays the paradigm of the male gaze in her story "The Bloody Chamber" where she distorts the passive and silent female stereotypes often inscribed in fairy tales, pornographic fiction and psychoanalytic theory. The male gaze is rejected in *"The Bloody Chamber"* because it reduces women to mere objects denying this way their pleasure. Here, male sexuality is death oriented; he murders his wives with his eye, penis and sword, male symbols of power and of patriarchal order (Sheets 1991: 642).

women by telling us the story through the voice of the heroine, this way granting moral complexity and narrative control to the wife, making readers sympathise with her dangerous situation.

Both subjugated groups, women and natives, have been reduced to stereotypes (virgin, whore dichotomy, “the other”) and denied an identity by the system that oppresses them. Constructions of the colonised are strongly influenced by the phallocentric prejudice that wrongly defines ‘native' women as passive and subsidiary inferiors. In fact, many of the representations of the female ‘native' figure in Western literature and art perpetuate the myth of the erotically charged female. In recent times, post-colonial studies have reacted to this viewpoint and subsequently involved themselves with the issue of gender, questioning to what extent this affects the lives of colonial subjects who also happen to be female, and by investigating whether gender or colonial oppression is the most significant factor in a woman’s life. The obvious fact that colonial oppression affects the lives of women, both socially and economically, has forced post-colonial critics to adopt an awareness of gender roles when discussing imperialist exploitation. Similarly, feminism has become much more aware of its post-colonial counterparts in recent times.

Conclusion

I first read Olive Senior and Michelle Cliff's short stories when I was doing my Erasmus Year in Louvain-la–Neuve, Belgium. They were part of the compulsory reading of a course entitled Modernism/Postmodernism. For me everything was brand new and fell in love with their stories. They were different from anything I had read before. I was transported to an exotic world in a remote Caribbean island that I had only heard about in tourist agencies as a place one could go to rest and eat as much as one wanted in an all-inclusive hotel. Both authors showed me a completely different paradise; the one in which people were fighting for their rights to be independent and where women were trying to avoid the stigma postcolonialism and patriarchy had imposed on them. My trip through their literature was also different then; I felt a part of the island, I empathised with the main characters and their worries, their racial concern and their traditions. In her essay "Towards a Black Feminist Criticism", Barbara Smith (1986) explains how racial and gender issues have been considered separately. She claims that neither Black men nor White feminist women understand the double pressure imposed on Black women. Therefore, talking about racial and gender issues together, being a Western White woman should seem impossible because it is unlikely to feel the double pressure that black women feel. Then Smith mentions how silence is even worse for lesbian Black women. The authors I'm dealing with in this Thesis are committed all these different voices. Olive Senior is black and Michelle Cliff is a lesbian. They add their experiences as Jamaican and feminists and this way they challenge the focus and content of what has been generally accepted as women's culture. As a white heterosexual woman, committing myself to gender and racial studies the way Smith proposes would appear to be nearly impossible. Yet, in my case I consider that I am an authorised voice to analyse the traditional silenced voice of these

women, even as an outsider but with a clear sense of fairness. Both authors incorporated me in their writings and I felt an urge to get myself immersed in their work and analyse their texts from historical, gender and racial perspectives.

This Thesis compares the works of both: Michelle Cliff and Olive Senior. Being from Jamaica might be, at first sight, the only characteristic they have in common. When I started researching about them I noticed they both have a substantial corpus of short stories and these two facts prompted me to establish certain connections. Their Jamaican origin took me to trace the main aspects of postcolonialism and how it is signalled in their work. The main theoretical framework, therefore, is inevitably postcolonialism and its characteristics as a movement that has occurred simultaneously to postmodernism with similar concerns both as regards form and topic. I knew I had to tackle issues such as spatial and temporal fragmentation, the dichotomy author/narrator and the most relevant influences of the authors in the way they appear in their short stories. The fact that both authors come from a former colony implies further investigation on the historical and identity evolution of the country as well as the authors. Postcolonial theory elaborates on racial conflict and as I deal with female authors, gender conflict has also been crucial to provide an extensive analysis. Therefore, a postcolonial perspective as well as a feminist one, are in order. I am essentially interested in the manner they propose an alternative discourse to the mainstream ideas about colonialism and patriarchy challenging the literary canon and traditional history. Considering both Cliff and Senior and other female Jamaican writers such as Sylvia Wynter, Lona Goodinson or Rachel Manley, one might talk about a generation.

Why did I try to compare two authors that had never been compared before? Even though they have statuses, ages and gender differences, the colonial experience in

Jamaica signals a common space. Both co-habit the same historical and cultural space and their expectations when outlining their stories appear to be quite similar; firstly, in the form, short stories and secondly, on their focus portraying the colonial experience in their homeland. The two female authors examined in this thesis contribute to the postcolonial corpus with different voices. When this doctoral Thesis was almost finished I decided I was ready to contact the two authors, since they are both contemporary and alive. In the case of Michelle Cliff it looked like if she had disappeared from this earth. I contacted her editors a couple of times but they never answered back. I checked if she had written anything recently and I could not find anything. It seems that since her partner for life, Adrienne Rich, died in 2012, Cliff has not written anything or given any interview. She seems to be a recluse. Later, I discovered that she died the 12th of June of this year. With Olive Senior I was luckier. I contacted her, exchanged several emails and tried to interview her. She was promoting her last volume of short stories in the United States, Canada and United Kingdom. As she was very busy and could not meet me in England or via Skype, I decided to send her some questions regarding her work that I have included at the end of this Thesis. After two months she answered. Yet, my disappointment was notorious. She only answered some of the questions and her conclusion was that it is the work of the critic to answer the questions. Senior considers that by no means she has to provide anyone with an insight of her work, of the way in which she constructs her characters or the theoretical framework of her work. She only seemed to be interested in my analysis of her story "Discerner of Hearts" as a fairy tale because she herself had also thought of it that way. At the end, I did not get any relevant or new information from this interview. Actually, she added to her brief answers the following conclusion: "This is as far as I can go. I'll wait to hear further from you. I do appreciate your interest in my work and the insight

you will no doubt bring to its interpretation. Perhaps you don't even need the author's contribution after all!". Therefore, what I provide in this Thesis is my own version of the writers and their work. I do not try to establish a bridge between them and the audience. The analysis comes from my perspective, I assumed what they were trying to imply with their short stories and the construction of the authors is absolutely personal. Both Senior and Cliff have become like characters themselves for me in all these years. I approach their texts after having read interviews, their biographies and articles about them, but they remain a mystery to me and I have constructed my own idea of them.

Apart from considering how the colonial experience appears in the works by Cliff and Senior and analysing their work from a thematic perspective, I present their texts from a formal point of view, studying the short story as a narrative genre. This subgenre arises an array of specific characteristics that I study and contrast. In this personal critical analysis of the stories by Michelle Cliff and Olive Senior, I approach them not only from a postcolonial perspective but also considering their work as a feminist alternative to traditional history. In all their stories both authors deal with gender and racial issues. The fact that they are women makes the genre acquire certain connotations within the feminist and postcolonial context. They also show how being women influences their narratives and their versions of reality. Both authors represent "the other" in terms of an imperialistic imposed perspective. They deal with colonial stereotyping and the way it relates to race, gender and social aspects. Therefore, in my arguments, I have elaborated on how the creation of archetypes reinforces the idea of "otherness" and situates the colonies in a peripheral position when compared to Britain.

In the first chapter of this Thesis, I deal with the way postcolonial authors confront canonical British literature by questioning traditional race and gender issues. I have analysed Senior's "Swimming in the Ba'ma grass" and Michelle Cliff's

"Columba". The two stories explore the abuse suffered by Black Jamaicans on the hands of powerful institutions fostered by the Empire such as the police, the church and the influence of White supremacy. Senior and Cliff are providing us with the other side of history. The side of those who do not have the guns and the power to make their voices heard.

Cliff and Senior challenge the idea that portrays the colonized subject as a silent inferior. Postcolonialism incorporates colonised subjects into the history of their own countries. Postcolonial authors give voice to those traditionally muted. They use their texts as a means of challenging "otherness" and empowering "the other". They reflect upon the construction of their texts as authorized versions of their colonial experience. Critics have signaled the importance of language in postcolonial literature. English, the language of civilization and the language of the dominant discourse, is the language used by postcolonial authors in order to write. To incorporate themselves in the conventions of literary and cultural criticism, paradoxically, and lets recall Caliban's speech, they employ the language that situated them as the peripheral "other". The colonised subject, ironically, uses the language of oppression, English, to explain their circumstance and to portray their identity, which is perceived as a split identity. The voice of the colonised subject appears as an alternative to that of the conqueror in postcolonial literature. Postcolonial authors confront canonical British literature to tackle colonialism with the established race and gender aspects. They subvert colonial discourse as it has shaped their identities from a Western perspective as a tool of empowerment. Postcolonialism incorporates the colonised subject into the history of his or her country. The experiences derived from this "otherness" contribute to the creation of an innovative corpus of stories in which traditional voices are displaced. Several projects to create a significant corpus to express the idiosyncrasy of a minority or a

former colony have been carried out in the last decades. Toni Morrison first compiled the “Black Book” in 1974. Morrison started to gather pictures, newspapers clippings, sheet music and postcards because she felt that the Afro-American community needed a closer examination of their history, even the most painful aspects of it. The first “Black Book” included advertisements for the public sale of Black slaves but also daily life portrays. Morrison claimed that she had to show African-Americans as smart and busy people to counteract the stereotypes created during the years of segregation. Nigerian author Chimammanda Ngozi Adichie, together with other Nigerian influential artists, has done something similar in recent years. They describe their project as follows: **“***Farafina Trust* is a non-profit organization established to promote reading, writing, and a culture of social introspection and engagement through the literary arts. We believe that development is not possible without a coherent understanding of the dynamics of our societies, which literature and the arts can help grasp. **(**http://farafinatrust.org/). They try to gather information about Nigeria and Nigerians carrying out cultural workshops. In an interview to the Guardian, Adichie says that they decided to do it "to create a safe space for those who are talented and want to write in Africa can come together and receive validation and share things" (http://allafrica.com/stories/201408291017.html); and also to challenge the single story.

Chapter Two examines the notion of hybridity. Hybridity is at work in postcolonial literature to the extent that it creates stereotypes that are not supposed to challenge the roles established through all the years of colonial occupation. Senior and Cliff provide us with a variety of these stereotypes and make us reflect upon identity issues. Both Cliff and Senior deconstruct the stereotype created by colonial discourse and show readers the fragmentation that this unilateral view has created upon the colonised subject. Hybridity refers to mixture and it has been employed in linguistics or

racial theory to explain how two diverse cultures blend and clash in colonial territories. Thus, postcolonialism claims that the two cultures contribute equally to colonial identity. In contemporary culture, both tendencies are frequently discussed, as authors are constantly addressing issues related to race and nation by revising their past and the evolution of the country as a distinctive culture based on this dichotomy. Hybridity and its representation has been analysed in this Thesis, considering the narrative voice as a postcolonial reaction to the western patriarchal establishment that prevailed in Jamaica during colonial times. Short stories by the two authors compared in this Thesis, rebel against the idea of the British canon as they effectively articulate the voices of an array of characters that were traditionally discriminated from the official discourse. Yet, as it is portrayed in these postcolonial narratives, identity-creation seems to be a difficult task for Black women: their characters need to define their identity not only as women but also in racial terms, as they seem to be stigmatised at the same time by racial and gender ideologies. Both "The Glass-Bottom Boat" and "Window" by Olive Senior, are set somewhere in Jamaica. The two stories talk about the contradictions that emerge in former colonies when dealing with tradition and change. "Window" is a love story. Two young lovers have to overcome the racial rules imposed upon them by their community. Brid comes from an impoverished White family in which their Whiteness is used to maintain their status. Jesse is a Black man who makes a fortune working in the Panama Canal. This story portrays how race permeates relationships in Jamaican society. The situation of Eric in "The Glass-Bottom Boat" is also marked by race and status. It deals with accepting the script that history and society have arranged for you, or escape the constraints of society by developing one's free will.

Within the theoretical framework of my research project, Chapter Three elaborates on how colonialism has been crucial to the current constitution of former

colonies and colonised subjects. I have approached it from intertextuality, a notion that appears in postcolonial texts as a way of challenging the traditional discourse imposed during the times of the Empire. I analyse the notion of intertextuality as it has evolved and in the way it can be found in the short stories chosen and in its importance in feminist contemporary theories. Since it was first coined in the 1960s up to our days, from structuralism to postcolonialism, the concept of intertextuality has been defined from different points of view. Intertextuality is based upon the idea that texts have no sense independently. I introduce the most relevant approaches in relation to this theory, from its antecedents in Saussure's linguistic theory to its use in criticism and literary current movements such as feminism and postcolonialism as the proper strategy to subvert stereotypical notions on femininity and racial standards. The term "Intertextuality" emerged when Julia Kristeva studied and combined Saussure's linguistic sign model together with Bakhtin's dialogical theory. After the structuralist approach, post-structuralism with Roland Barthes as its core representative added a social dimension to the theory. In his essay, "The Death of the Author", Barthes questions author, reader and text's traditional roles. After tackling Harold Bloom's conception of the literary net as a battleground between authors and their predecessors, I elaborate on how intertextuality is understood by feminist and postcolonial critics and authors. Keeping this theory in mind, my central objective is to examine how the two female authors compared in this dissertation have incorporated this technique in their writings. I focus on the way Senior and Cliff have deconstructed negative racial and gender roles in relation to the conventional historical discourse. Intertextuality as a literary strategy disrupts long-held assumptions about the production of texts, as it focuses on notions regarding the roles of author and reader. Traditional conceptions of texts gave great importance to the figure of the author; yet, intertextuality questions the

role of the author. For postcolonial writers, along with other situated critics such as feminists, the absence of the author results in oppression. Highly concerned with minority groups, one of their main purposes is to authorise their narratives and to ascribe specific interpretations to them to subvert traditional representations of gender and race in literature, history and society. Postcolonial writers have devoted their texts to revisit and rewrite canonical texts that traditionally have left them voiceless. These writers, satirically, appropriate existing imagery of the colonial subjects so as to transform them by adapting them to their purposes. Senior and Cliff recover latent cultural and historical content and construct their own narratives upon early feminist transgressive thought. They create narratives to challenge traditional established perspectives. Intertextuality generates tension between the elements borrowed from the source text and the new ones incorporated in a subversive manner. Therefore, Chapter Three focuses on the most significant changes given to the story in comparison to the canon. It evaluates how conventional texts have been reoriented in terms of narrative voice challenging matters of authorship and contents.

Senior's "Discerner of Hearts" and Cliff's "Screen memory" tell past instances of the life of the main female characters and how they affect their present lives. Memory works as a means of coping with the cultural colonial past of the main characters. Intertextuality, here, serves to contrast the postcolonial subjects' perspectives with the long lasted assumptions about colonies. At a textual level, memory works as a healing agent. At a creative level, intertextuality does the same when considered a subversive strategy employed in post-colonialism or feminism. Remembrance becomes a decisive requirement in curing the unease produced by the lack of control they have over their lives. Memory becomes crucial for the female protagonists in the building up of their stories. It also becomes central in the form of intertextuality for women writers in their

endeavour to establish themselves as legitimate creators capable of authorising their narratives. The recasting of the past through memory symbolises their endeavours to revise a long-standing canonical discourse, which serves them in their desire to provoke a change in the ideals and conceptions towards Black women implanted in their society. Some of the short stories by Cliff and Senior present a need to remember so as to be healed of the wounds caused by a traumatic past. For these authors, intertextuality is the healer, the solution to avoid the conventional and patriarchal images of womanhood and Blackness embedded in canonical traditional texts such as the texts colonialism has traditionally attempted to write.

In Chapter Four, the concept of historiographic metafiction as a specific type of intertextuality has been defined. This theoretical framework intimately related with comparative literature is crucial to trace the literary context in which the works by Senior and Cliff are developed as well as an effective comparison between the two. In relation with intertextuality, I talk about the way in which Jamaica is represented as a postcolonial country using the theory of historiographic metafiction. To complement the analysis of the different short stories it is necessary to consider the historical evolution of the country and its people. By employing historiographic metafiction as a theoretical framework allows me to tackle both the development of the authors and the characters they portray in their writings in relation to the evolution of Jamaica as a postcolonial country. Therefore, I explain historiographic metafiction as a specific type of intertextuality which employs historical texts. With the aim of showing the most significant aspects of historiographic metafiction, I deploy the work of scholars Linda Hutcheon and Brian McHale. Their expertise is on the different literary strategies used in postmodernism such as historiographic metafiction within the context of parodic intertextuality. I also study how this specific form of intertextuality referring to

historical events has been used by contemporary writers belonging to minority groups to challenge the long-held vision of history from an alternative point of view. I explore how historiographic metafiction serves to question our historical past.

Historiographic metafiction is considered within the context of parodic intertextuality, and it refers to historical events and has been used by contemporary writers who belong to minority groups in order to provide a different view of history. Historiographic metafiction analyses how the incorporation of intertexts from history serve authors to integrate their renditions of the past and give themselves a voice within the facts they are narrating. It tackles the relation between past and present and the way it is represented in the work of the two authors compared. Historiographic metafiction is calling for a rethinking of the social, political and historical representations of our world. By incorporating traditionally silenced voices we get to fully understand the historical development and the social constructions of our society. By rewriting canonical texts, postcolonial authors are filling the historical gaps left by colonial discourse; former colonies are given a history and a past that Imperialism tried to hide to justify their position in those territories. Postcolonial authors explore imperial intellectual history and show how ideas related to race, culture, and identity can be remapped. Both Cliff and Senior incorporate in their writings the most outstanding elements of the folklore and cultural tradition of native Jamaicans. They provide their readers with hints of their Caribbean roots as well as the new cultural elements incorporated during colonisation. Both authors attempt to disrupt the historical representations embedded in certain historical documents by giving them a positive space. In this chapter I study two texts by Cliff's" Keeper of all Souls" and "A Woman who plays Trumpet is Deported". In both cases historical texts are included in the

stories. In the case of “A Woman who plays Trumpet is Deported”, Cliff uses an actual trumpet player to construct her fiction.

Finally, Chapter Five analyses two stories by Olive Senior: “The Case against the Queen” and “You Think I Mad Miss”. In these stories, Senior questions the way patriarchy has traditionally considered female versions of events as unreliable and incomplete. The author appropriates these female voices to empower women as autonomous and trustworthy. Patriarchy denies this political power to women and situates women who decide not to follow the mainstream or rebel against the role assigned to them by society as psychologically unstable and as outsiders. This point is made clear as both main characters by Senior are under the control of the male representatives of political and patriarchal power. There is a political language that excludes women and therefore their possibility of being autonomous and authorising their own history. If one analyses the role of the author in texts it can be concluded that this very role is that of creating characters and events out of their imagination. This is precisely what the narrator in every text echoes. Yet, in these stories, several frameworks of textual construction appear. In both stories, the insanity created by the imposition of the language of the conqueror and the acceptance that one’s identity is constructed from the perspective of the dominant culture are also tackled. This story questions authorship and the creation of texts. Both subjugated groups, women and natives, have been reduced to stereotypes and denied an identity by the system that oppresses them. Postcolonial studies have reacted to this viewpoint questioning to what extent this affects the lives of colonial subjects who also happen to be female.

To conclude, I consider that this Thesis establishes a connection between two, otherwise, very much unconnected authors. It raises issues that can be of importance to the study of the work of other contemporary Jamaican women writers and raises a

common concern for a specific twentieth century writing style. Furthermore, it opens the possibility of further study within the Jamaican literary context, since during the last decades there has emerged a group of different and new women writers who express their concerns of race and gender and deal with the history of the island and its development as a cultural landmark in the Caribbean.

Appendix

Questions for Olive Senior

1) How's your childhood in Jamaica represented in your stories?
2) Your work is quite political in that it represents issues dealt by current politics such as race, gender, economy, social measures…how do you think literature can be employed as a political weapon?
3) Postcolonialism in literature has been quite political in that it tried to provide readers with different perspectives, with the perspective of those under British rule rather that the "official" view imposed by the empire. How crucial has this been in your writing?
4) Postcolonial and feminist theories deal with the difficulties female authors and postcolonial authors face "authorising" their own writings that usually portray a non-official view of events and protagonists of these events. How do you feel this has influenced your writing?
5) In your short stories there's instances of a generation gap; characters who were born under the British rule and their evolution towards independence and a new time and rule (e.g "The Chocho Vine, "Window") How has this evolution and change affected your writing?
6) I understand most of your stories as containing a great feminist message (eg "You think I Mad, Miss?"), how do you think feminism has influenced you and your writing? Would you inscribe yourself with "sorority" and women's empowering?
7) Race is another important issue in Jamaica and you talk about it openly in your short stories… How has it influenced your writing and how "Hibridity" is crucial to understand your creative standards?

8) One of the chapters in my phd deal with “Historiographic metafiction” …how do you think it is portrayed in your short stories? Is there any in which you tried it to appear more significant?
9) I think I fell in love with your writing with “Discerner of Hearts”. I’ve analysed it like a contemporary fairy tale as it contains magic, an ordeal, an initiation ritual, a girl who is developing her personality…how would you consider this story as a tale or fable?
10) Within your short stories we can find a broad representation of Jamaican society. How do you elaborate on your main characters?
11) Why do you favour short stories over novel writing?
12) I’m comparing your work with Michelle Cliff’s short stories. How would you relate your work with that of other Jamaican writers such as Cliff?

Olive Senior’s reply

Dear Eva,

Apologies again for being so tardy with my reply. And also because this is not as complete as you perhaps would like it. Please feel free to get back to me with any additional questions or comments you might have. My answers below are due not to laziness but my inability to come to grips with certain types of questions. Please don't take this personally - I think that as a writer I approach the subject from inside and the reader or critic is approaching it from outside so the two perspectives are quite different.

So this is just a general response to your questions before I try to answer any specific one.

I am going to have a problem with answering some of your questions, specifically 3,4,6,7, 8 which frame them from the position of the literary critic but which is not

meaningful to me as writer because this is not the position - that is, theoretical - from which I approach my work. So there is little point in asking me how postcolonial or feminist theories have affected my writing. It is for the reader or critic to extrapolate the theoretical underpinning from what I write. I would be willing to answer questions if they are framed differently. In the meantime I will try to answer those questions that I am able to. As far as question no. 1 is concerned, it seems that this is also a question to be answered by the reader as that will answer the "how".

2. Re literature as a political weapon: I don't think literature is meant to be any sort of weapon. I think the role of literature is to enable people to "see" differently and it is those new visions that might enable change by illuminating the world beyond everyday life. (I'm sending you separately the text of a talk I gave in answer to the question: Should literature be political? Which answers the question, especially the last few paragraphs).

5. All my stories are concerned with exploring conflict so changes and transitions are very much part of my consciousness and this includes polarities such as age and youth, changes wrought by travel, tradition versus modernity and so on. These issues are very much of a part of my new collection of stories - The Pain Tree (Toronto: Cormorant Press 2015) and will undoubtedly continue to shape my future work.

9. I very much appreciate what you have to say about "Discerner of Hearts". You are perhaps the only person I know of so far who has picked up on the fairy tale qualities which I embedded in this work so I am glad you have chosen to explore this. I saw the

story in terms of a rite of passage for Sadie with symbolic objects and properties from the fairy tale, such as comb magic at the end.

10. I am not sure what you mean by "elaborate on" the main characters. Can you rephrase? Do you mean where do the characters come from? I'll await your answer before replying.

11. I have written so much about this that I am also going to send you separately two articles "Lessons from the fruit stand" and my contribution to "The Short Story" in a volume with the same name by Bloomsbury press. I think these should give you a good idea of where I am coming from.

12. I don't think it is my job as a writer to relate my work to another's. At least, I am never interested in doing this. I think this is the job of the reader or critic.

This is as far as I can go. I'll wait to hear further from you. I do appreciate your interest in my work and the insight you will no doubt bring to its interpretation. Perhaps you don't even need the author's contribution after all!

Accept my warmest wishes for a happy and productive 2016.

Best,

Olive

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